

PIERS PLOWMAN HISTORIES



JUNIOR
BOOK
VI.

ENGLAND

PHYSICAL MAP OF

ENGLAND

English Miles

Forests	Marsh and Fen Lands
	Lowlands (0 - 600 feet)
	Uplands (600 - 1200 ")
	Highlands (over 1200 ")



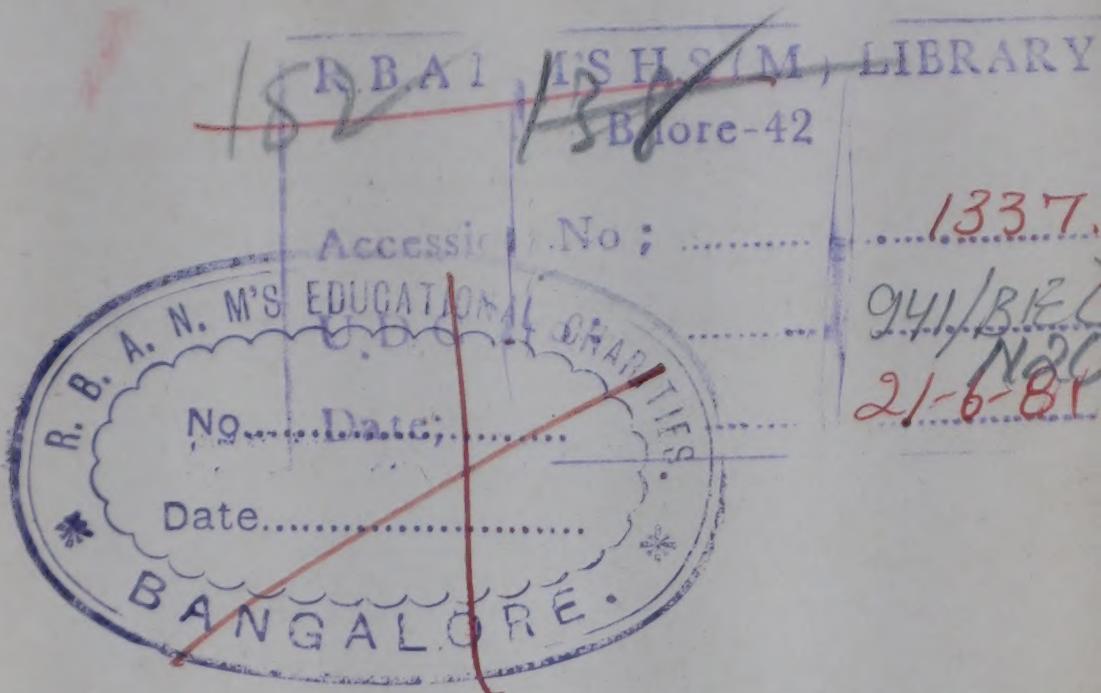
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JUNIOR BOOK VI

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THE NATION AND ITS GOVERNMENT
FROM EARLIEST TIMES TO 1485

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FORMERLY LECTURER IN HISTORY AT GOLDSMITHS' COLLEGE, UNIVERSITY OF LONDON
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SECOND EDITION



From the Louterell Psalter.

"A faire felde ful of folke fonde I there botwene
Of alle maner of men, the meane and the riche,
Worching and wandryng, as the worlde asketh."

The Vision of Piers Plowman.

LONDON

GEORGE PHILIP & SON, LTD., 32, FLEET STREET

Liverpool: PHILIP, SON, & NEPHEW, Ltd., 20, Church Street

1920

First Edition, October, 1913. Reprinted April, 1916

Reprinted July, 1917. Reprinted May, 1918.

Reprinted July, 1920.

PREFACE

A POET who lived more than five hundred years ago, at the end of the fourteenth century, tells how on a May morning he wandered forth into the Malvern Hills. Wrapped in a rough shepherd's cloak, he lay down and fell asleep. He dreamed that he saw eastwards, towards sunrise, a tower, and Truth was therein ; westwards he saw a deep vale, wherein dwelt Death and wicked spirits ; and between these there lay a Fair Field full of folk, of all manner of men, the mean and the rich, working and wandering as in this world men must.

There were ploughmen toiling on the land, men buying and selling, hermits living alone in cells, lawyers, priests, palmers, and idle folk. Amongst them he saw the king himself. But of all those whom he saw in his dream, Peter, the honest Ploughman—whom he called Piers Plowman—was the chief.

It was a vision of the life of his time ; and when he awoke he wrote the great poem called “The Vision of William concerning Piers Plowman.” This poem has given the title to these history books, which tell, as it does, of all manner of men who have worked and wandered in this world.

In Books IV. and V. we looked into the homes of men, and saw how they did their daily work, in cave and forest, in village and town, in monastery and church, in factory and mine. In Books VI. and VII. we watch a mighty Nation grow up out of many small beginnings in the distant past. But because we have little space in which to tell a great story, we have had to leave parts of it quite untold. Some of the big events of Scottish History we have tried to tell. But the story of Ireland we have not touched, because this is so difficult for English and Scottish people to understand, that it needs a whole book to itself.

E. H. S.

GOLDSMITHS' COLLEGE,
UNIVERSITY OF LONDON.

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R. P. 1888
THE NATION AND ITS
GOVERNMENT

FROM THE EARLIEST TIMES TO 1485

CHAPTER I.—BRITAIN BEFORE THE ROMANS
CAME *

THE first human beings, who are known to have lived in our country, are called by us Old Stone Men, because they did not know anything about metals, but made their tools and weapons out of roughly chipped flints. No one can tell when first they began to live here, but it was so many thousands of years ago that even mountains, rivers, and sea coasts, and climate, which only change very very slowly indeed, have altered a great deal since their coming. In their time



FIG. 1.—Our Islands joined to the Continent in the time of Old Stone Man.

* See P. P. Hists., Jun. Bk. IV., Chap. I.-IV.

Britain was not separated from the continent by the salt water of the channel. Great forests, plains, and river valleys lay where is now the bed of the North Sea. Sometimes for hundreds of years the climate was warmer than it is now ; sometimes for hundreds of years it was much colder, so that even in the summer-time the mountain tops were covered with snow, and rivers of ice, called glaciers, flowed down from them into the valleys below. Many a river, which now flows through a deep valley, then flowed through a shallow one, for it had not yet had time to hollow out its bed. The animals which Old Stone Men saw were very unlike the peaceful ones which inhabit Britain now. In the warm centuries lions, tigers, hippopotamuses, elephants, and others roamed about. In the cold centuries only mammoths, reindeer, bears, and other animals, that had very thick furs, and layers of fat under their skins, could manage to live. Old Stone Man must have been very plucky. No doubt he, having only poor weapons, kept out of the way of fierce animals, and only hunted more peaceful ones like deer and wild ox. He was a good hunter, for only by killing animals could he get a living. He did not know how to grow corn, or to keep sheep and cows, or to spin and weave. His only clothes were skins. Very often he must have been both cold and hungry.

* * * * *

At last all the Old Stone Men disappeared, and about 4000 B.C. New Stone Men began to come to Britain. By their time the English Channel had appeared, so they had to sail across it. They knew how to polish their flint axes, but did not always take the trouble to do so. It was easier for them than for Old Stone Men to make themselves comfortable, for they knew how to

keep domestic animals ; so they had more to eat, and did not go hungry so often as Old Stone Men. They were dark-haired and had dark skins. We should have thought them small.

* * * * *

About the year 2000 B.C. New Stone Men were attacked by taller, cleverer men than themselves, who were landing in Britain from the continent. The newcomers had discovered the use of a metal made of mixed copper and tin, and called by us bronze. Out of it they were able to make axes, daggers, spears, cups, bracelets and other things. They could also spin woollen and linen threads, and make them into cloth, so they had something better than skins to wear. And they could grow crops of corn, as well as keep cattle and hunt wild animals. So they were much better off than either Old Stone Men or New Stone Men. Probably their hair was light, but they inter-married with the New Stone people, so that many of their children were dark-haired and dark-skinned, and short of stature.

* * * * *

While the men who used bronze were dwelling in Britain, a great multitude of people called Celts came into Europe from the East. They fought against the Greeks and Romans, who were the most civilised peoples of ancient times. The Greek and Roman writers wrote descriptions of them, which we still possess, and the Greek sculptors even made statues of Celtic warriors, of which we can see copies in our museums. Vast numbers of Celts entered and settled in Italy, Spain, and France, and some about the year 800 B.C. began to pass over into Britain. The first Celts who arrived knew nothing about iron ; but four hundred years later others came to our

island. These later arrivals knew how to make weapons and other articles out of iron.

When we speak of the Ancient Britons we mean the Celts. Their descendants are still living here, and some of them still talk the Celtic language, read Celtic books and wear Celtic clothes. Many Irishmen are Celts; so are the Welsh and the Scottish Highlanders. Many men among these peoples still speak Celtic tongues, and in the North of Scotland can still be seen tartan plaids which are a kind of Celtic dress.

In appearance the Celts were light-haired, pale-faced and tall. But many of them inter-married with the

earlier people of Britain, and their children were often dark-haired, dark complexioned, and short. The men wore loose trousers, fastened closely round the ankle, and a tunic or shirt, which was held in at the waist by a belt. Over all was flung a kind of mantle or plaid, fastened on the right shoulder with a brooch. The feet were protected by rough shoes called brogues. The woman's chief garment was a long tunic which reached to her feet. Sometimes above this she wore a shorter tunic reaching to the knee.



FIG. 2.—A Briton.

The cloth, of which the clothes were made, was like the Highland tartan of to-day. It was woven of threads of different colours, and was covered with squares. Jewels

of all kinds, such as collars of gold or bronze armlets, bracelets, ear-rings, pins, brooches, finger-rings, and strings of beads, were a delight to all Celts. They decorated their horses as carefully as themselves; the leather straps of the harness were often held together with gold studs. Even the metal and earthenware pots and pans in Celtic houses were carefully ornamented with beautiful flowing lines, which artists love to copy to-day.

In war-time the warrior dyed his hair and moustache red, and stained himself blue with woad to give himself a terrifying appearance. Upon his head he wore a bronze helmet which sometimes had horns on it; on his left arm he carried a shield, with his right he brandished a huge sword. Sometimes he was armed with spear and javelin also.

Some tribes had war-chariots pulled by teams of two small horses. In these the javelin-thrower loyed to gallop up and down the enemies' line, casting javelins at his foes, and trusting to the din and his terrifying appearance to scare them. He was always accompanied by a man who drove the horses while he hurled his javelins. While the chariot dashed along at full speed the javelin-thrower used to step on to the pole between the horses, run along it, and even stand on the horse-collars, in order to be able to throw his javelins from a height.

All Britain in Celtic times was not ruled by one king. The country was divided among many different tribes or clans, each of which had a king or chief at the

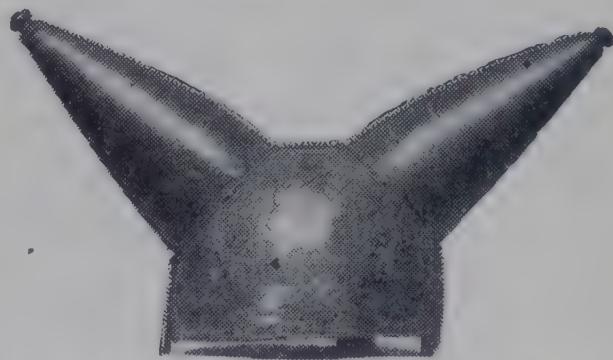


FIG. 3.—Celtic Bronze Helmet, found in Thames at Waterloo Bridge.

head of it. Every member of the tribe or clan had the same name, and considered himself to be a relation of every other man and woman in his tribe. Because the tribesmen were all related to one another, each man could trust another in the day of battle. We know the names of some of the Celtic tribes who lived in Southern Britain, for the famous Roman writer, Julius Caesar, wrote them down in an account he gave of two expeditions to Britain. The Cantii lived in Kent, the Trinovantes in Essex, the Iceni in Norfolk and Suffolk, the Catuvellauni in Hertfordshire and Middlesex, the Regni in Sussex, and others elsewhere.

Inside the tribe were bodies of men more closely related to each other. In those far-off days policemen were unknown, so every man trusted to his near relations to protect him against his enemies. His relations also had to keep him in good order. So every man was careful to know exactly who were his uncles, and he knew all his first, second, third, and fourth cousins, and often even more distant cousins than these. It is all very different in England to-day; we do not regard all Englishmen as our relations, neither do we always know our cousins.

The surface of Southern Britain is partly mountainous and partly more or less level. The mountainous regions are all in the north or west, in the parts we call Wales, Yorkshire, and Cumberland; the more level parts lie in the Midlands and south. Of course there are hills in the south, such as the North and South Downs, the Chilterns, Cotswolds, Mendips, and Dartmoor heights, but none of them are very lofty; rarely do they rise to 1000 feet above the sea. In appearance the mountainous north and west has not altered much since the time of the Celts; but in the lower-lying south-east the whole face

of the country has changed. To-day there are hardly any big forests in England ; in Celtic days great stretches of country were covered with them. All the space between the North and South Downs, which we call the Weald, was filled with a dense forest of oaks, beeches, and other trees, which grew in great abundance on the clayey soil of those parts. Nowadays, if you stand on the Downs and look over the Weald you will see plenty of trees and woods, but nothing like a forest ; there are vast expanses of fields. But in Celtic times the forest was thick and dark, and because more rain fell than now, the clayey soil underneath the trees was wet and cold, so that no man wanted to live on it or even walk across it. In many parts of England there were forests like that of the Weald ; there was the Forest of Arden in Warwickshire, Cannock Chase in Staffordshire, a huge Epping Forest in Essex, Rockingham Forest in Northamptonshire, and Sherwood Forest in Nottinghamshire, and others.

The rivers too were different. A man who walks through the fields by the Thames near Gravesend in Kent, or Tilbury in Essex, cannot see the river at all. When steamers go up and down it, he can only see the funnels and masts. Between him and the river there is on each bank a high earthen wall, which keeps the waters of the river in a narrow channel. Were it not for these embankments the Thames estuary at high water would be miles wider, for all the low-lying fields to north and south of it would be covered. The walls were not there in Celtic times.

Many rivers had marshes at their mouths. The rivers Nen, Welland, and Ouse, which empty themselves into the Wash, in those far-away times were allowed to spread themselves during floods all over the surrounding

country. Huge stretches of Cambridgeshire became an inland sea, out of which gravelly knolls rose here and there like islands ; for more rain fell then than now, the sky was more often cloudy, mist hung repeatedly over everything. So pools had less chance of drying than they have now. The waters teemed with fish of all kinds, pike, perch, bream, rudd, dace, roach, stickleback, lamprey, eel, and others. Paddling about on the surface and in and out of beds of sedges, rushes, and osiers were herons, ducks, geese, swans, coots, waterhens, teal, and many another kind of bird. In summer-time the fens had less water in them, but even then there were dark morasses and sedgy pools everywhere. To-day nearly all the fen country has been drained, the rivers are banked up, so that they must flow in narrow channels, and there are fields of corn and grazing cattle where once there were miles of water. The sticklebacks and the wild geese and all their funny and feathered companions are much fewer than they were.

When forest and fen covered so much ground, the open spaces where men could live and feed their herds were fewer in Celtic times than to-day. Of course the tops of the Chalk downs, Salisbury Plain, and the wolds of Norfolk, Suffolk, and Yorkshire have always been free. Even on the clay soils, that were covered with forest, or along the banks of rivers, and in fens, there were little stretches of gravelly soil where the trees to be cut down were fewer and smaller, where the ground was dry, and where a man could build himself a comfortable house.

The Celts built Camulodunum, which nowadays we call Colchester, and Verulamium, which we call St. Albans, on soil like this. But the most famous gravel site in England or in the world to-day is that on which

a few Celts erected the little collection of huts, which later on grew into the great city of London. This site is now partly occupied by Cannon Street Station. It was not Celts, however, but Romans who first made London into an important place.

CHAPTER II.—BRITAIN IN ROMAN TIMES *

WHILE London was still unheard of, the city of Rome in Italy was the capital of a great empire. Seven hundred and fifty-three years before Christ was born Romulus founded it upon the Palatine Hill which rose beside the river Tiber. Men flocked to live there. Their descendants became such fierce warriors that gradually they conquered all Italy, Spain, Greece, North Africa, Asia Minor, Egypt, and Syria. All this great empire was ruled over by a Senate which was a kind of parliament. Every year two rulers called consuls were elected to govern at home with the Senate's advice; and men called pro-consuls, which means "agents for consuls," or others called praetors, were sent to govern provinces over the sea.

In 58 B.C. Julius Caesar was made a pro-consul: he marched into Gaul with an army, and spent eight years in conquering it. While he was fighting in Northern Gaul he often saw the white cliffs of Dover rising out of the Channel, and wondered what sort of a country Britain was. The friends at Rome, to whom he wrote letters, had heard of those same white cliffs, and they, too, were eager to hear of what lay beyond them. Caesar sent

* See P. P. Hists. :—

Jun. Bk. IV., Chapter V.

Jun. Bk. II., Stories of Boadicea and Julius Caesar.

Sen. Bk. I., Part II., "Story of Julius Caesar," "Story of Caratacus," and "Story of Boadicea."

IN ROMAN TIMES

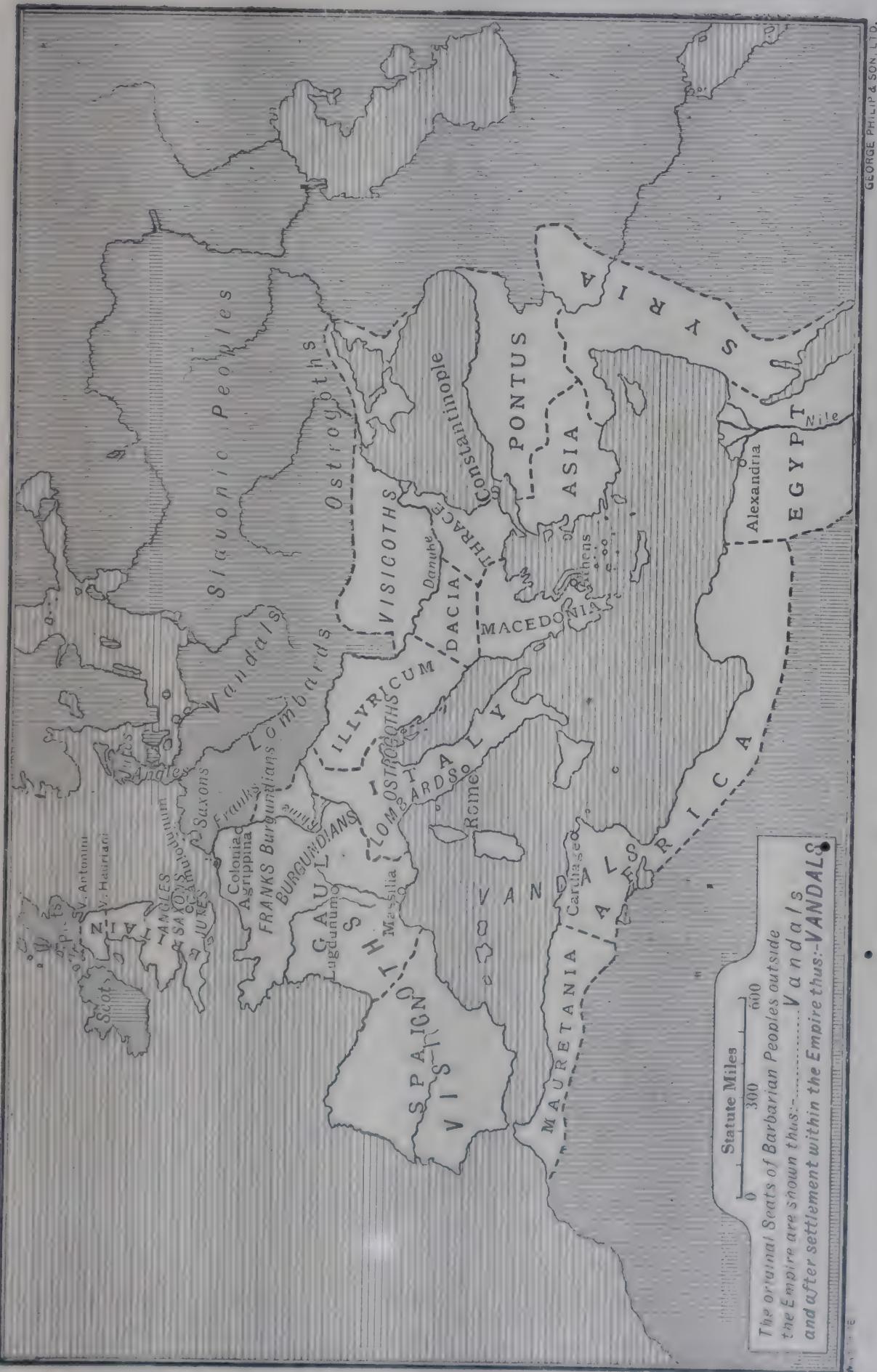


FIG. 4.—The Roman Empire and the German Races that invaded it.

for some of the Celts of Gaul, and asked them questions about Britain, but could get no satisfactory answers. But in 55 B.C. and in 54 B.C. Caesar sailed across the Straits of Dover with an army to see the country for himself. The inhabitants of the south-east part fought fiercely against him, and his soldiers were terrified by sudden attacks, and by the javelin men on chariots. So eventually Caesar gave up his hopes of conquest. While in Britain he learned a good deal about the people, and when he wrote a book about his victories over the Celts of Gaul, he added an account of the Celts of Britain. But he never saw for himself any districts except those which we call Kent and Middlesex.

In 44 B.C. he was stabbed to death by his enemies in Rome, because with the help of his army he had made himself master of the whole Roman Empire, and compelled the consuls and the Senate to do his will.

For nearly a hundred years after Caesar no more Roman soldiers came to Britain. At last Caesar's grand-nephew Augustus made himself ruler of all the Roman Empire in 29 B.C., and in future the Senate and the consuls and pro-consuls and praetors had to obey his commands. Augustus and all his successors are called "emperors," a word which means "commanders." One of these successors, the Emperor Claudio*s*, in 43 A.D. sent a general with an army to conquer Britain. The tribes of the Catuvellauni and Trinovantes fought desperately against him under the leadership of a British chief called Caratacus. But the Romans captured the town of Camulodunum, and drove the chief into the hills of the country which we call Wales. The other tribes in the south-east of the island submitted to the invaders, but in Wales Caratacus found some swarthy, curly headed Britons, who were ready to go on fighting for freedom. Men say that the

earthen ramparts, which he and his men made to defend themselves against Roman attacks, can still be seen marking the sides of Welsh hills. In a great battle he was defeated, and soon afterwards he was captured, and sent to Rome to appear before the Emperor Claudius.



FIG. 5.—This picture shows the spot where part of the Roman town of Verulamium once stood.

There he bore himself like a brave man, and was given a house in which to live with his wife and children.

After Caratacus went to Rome the Celts of the hilly country in Wales and Yorkshire continued to fight for a long time against the Romans. But there was only one important rebellion in Southern Britain. Boudicca, queen of the Iceni, who lived in Norfolk and Suffolk, massacred some Romans, and burned some of their towns. But she was defeated at last. After that there was no more fighting in the south for many a long year.

All Roman soldiers were therefore sent from the south to the west or north. Great stone camps were built at York, Chester, and Caerleon on Usk, where heavily armed soldiers were stationed. And among the hills travellers to-day can still see the ruins of smaller camps, where light-armed soldiers lived. They were lightly armed so that they might be able to chase the swift Britons over the hills.

For about three hundred and fifty years Romans ruled in Britain. They prevented enemies called Picts, who lived in Scotland, from entering the civilised parts. They had law courts in which to judge criminals. They collected taxes, and enlisted soldiers. Orders constantly came from the Emperor in Rome, and squads of soldiers were constantly being sent to the camps in the west and the north. Tax gatherers, judges, soldiers, and imperial messengers wanted to travel quickly, so the Romans made great roads. They ran straight across country, not often turning aside to right or left. So straight are they, and so different from our English roads, which twist and wind, that we are in the habit of thinking, whenever we see a particularly straight piece of road, that it must run along the line of an old Roman one. A great many of our roads actually do so. If you were to walk from London Bridge along the Old Kent Road, across Blackheath, over Shooters Hill, and then straight on for many miles to Dover, you would be travelling along a Roman road. It was a good road in the old days, as it is to-day, and a busy one too.

Along it were inns with stables full of horses, so that travellers could rest and eat and get fresh horses in place of tired ones. Messengers came riding fast along it with letters containing good and bad news. The Emperor who ruled all the civilised world sometimes used to ride

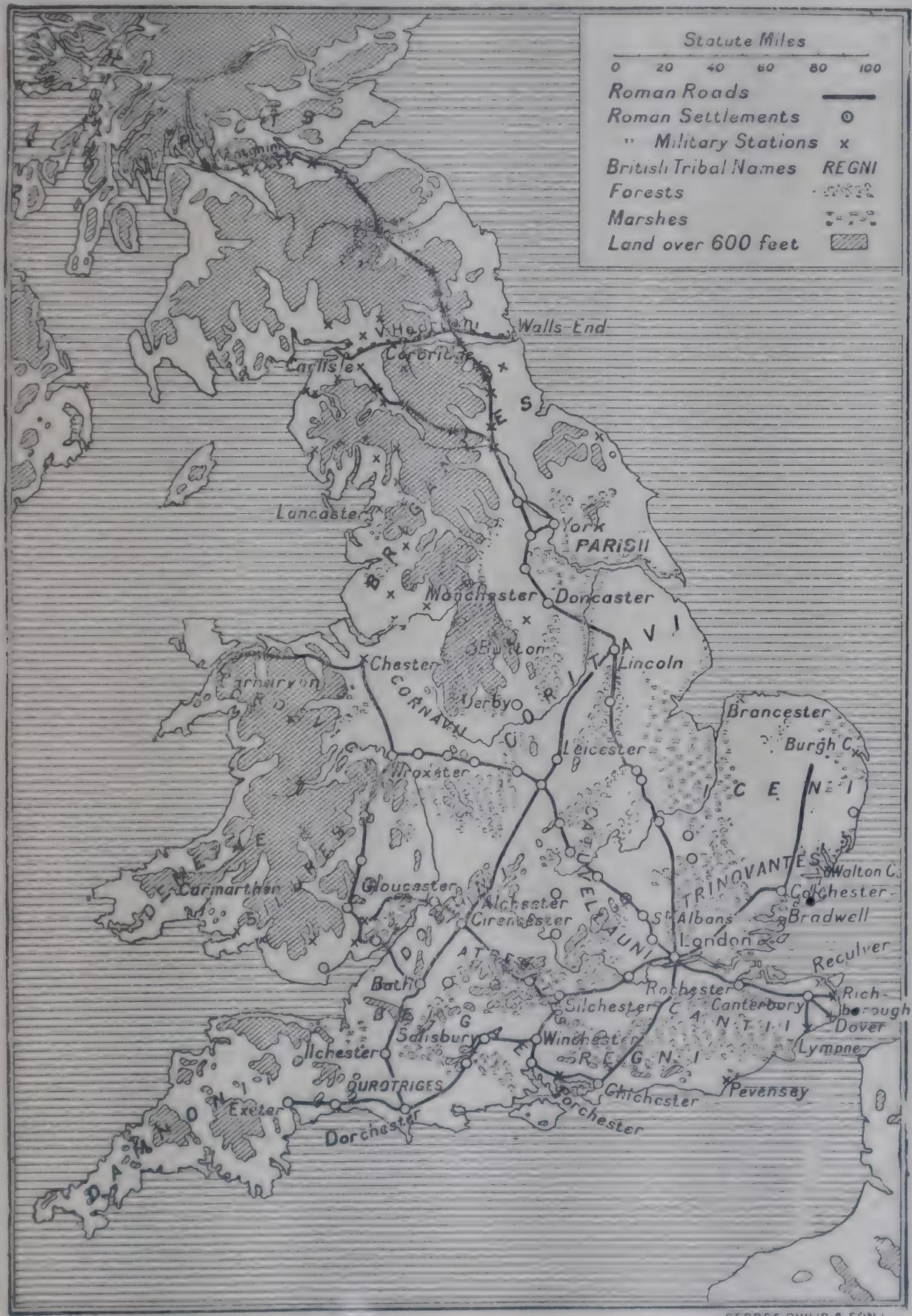


FIG. 6.—Roman Britain shewing the chief Roman Roads.



FIG. 7.—The Roman Wall.

along it at the head of his soldiers. Young soldiers, who came from far away to fight for the Emperor in Britain against his enemies, marched along it, and as they marched you could hear their armour ring. Roman soldiers served in the army for twenty years, so few of them saw their homes again. Most of them died in Britain. At York or Chester, or among the Pennine Hills, you may find their tombstones. Christian missionaries also travelled along our road, telling the story of Jesus Christ, and reading aloud from scrolls or parchments, on which parts of the Bible were written.

But while we still use some roads which Romans made, we have almost forgotten many others. People, who love to walk about England looking for remains of Roman days, sometimes come to grass-grown tracks, or muddy farm roads that run straight across country, up hill and down dale for long stretches. Then, although all signs of paving have disappeared, and nothing moves along it, except perhaps sheep and cows or farmers, they know they are looking at a road which Romans made hundreds

of years ago. No one made such good roads again until about the middle of the eighteenth century.

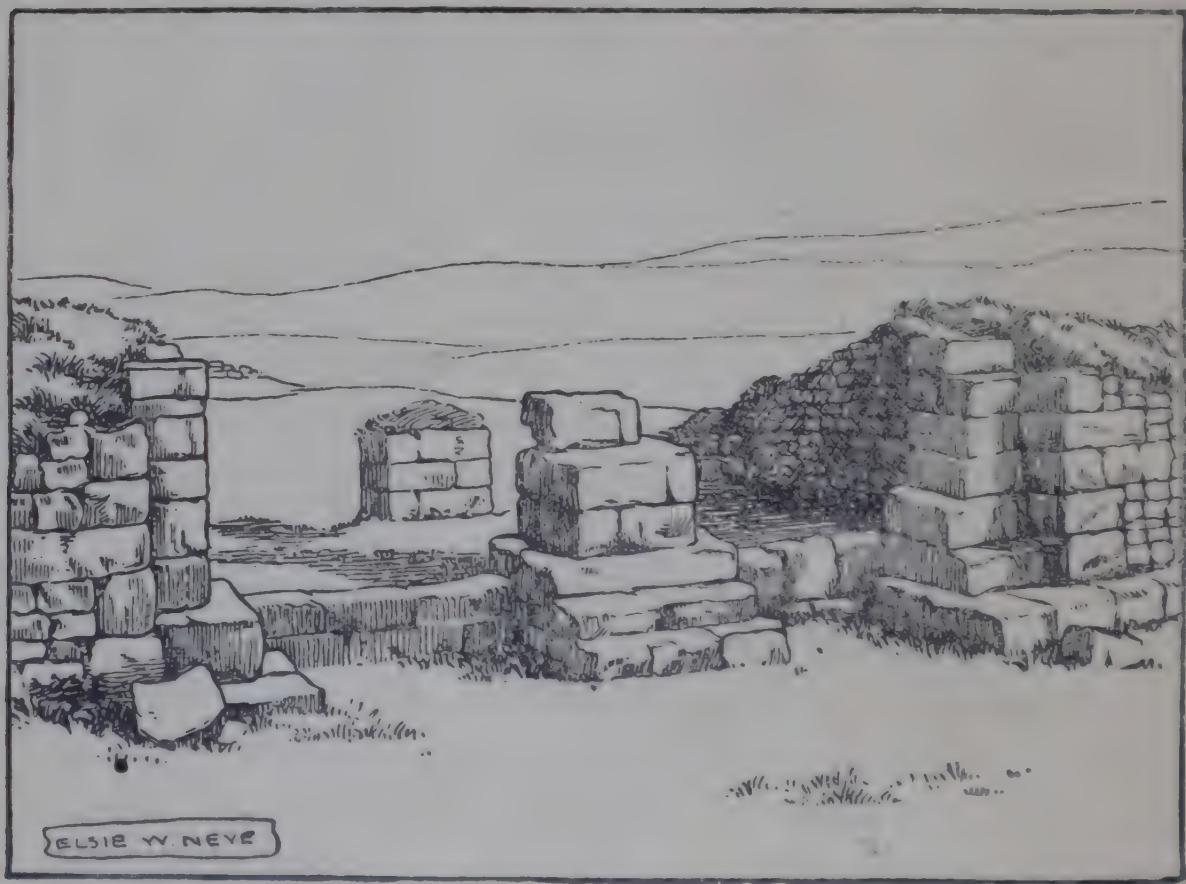
If instead of crossing London Bridge towards Dover, you had turned north, you would have come, after a journey of over three hundred miles, to what is called the Roman Wall. This wall was built of stone across



FIG. 8.—View of some of the remains of the Roman Wall in Northumberland. It still stands about four or five feet high. Where it runs along a hilltop, as in the picture, it needed no ditch in front of it.

Britain, from the Solway Firth to the North Sea. It was thick and high, and had a ditch in front of it to prevent Picts from climbing over it and attacking the villas and towns behind it. If you go to that part of the country to-day, you can see the half-filled ditch and the ruins of the wall; it still runs across the hills for miles and miles. You can see the stone

camps where the soldiers lived, the remains of the long buildings in which they slept and ate, the ruts which were made in the gateways by the wheels of the carts that carried the soldiers' food into camp, and the places where idle soldiers sat in the sun and sharpened their knives on the stones. In places you can see the repairs which the soldiers made. Sometimes the Picts attacked



• FIG. 9.—The Ruined Gateway of a Camp on the Roman Wall.

the wall and the camps in the night-time, and killed the soldiers, and smashed everything they could. But the soldiers always came back again and repaired the damage.

Close to the camps are the baths that the Romans loved. Sometimes you can find a well outside the walls, from which water good for health can be got. Soldiers used to go there and drink, and throw in a coin as payment

to the fairy that guarded the well. Those coins have been found lying at the bottom, and can be seen in our museums. Farther off are the pastures, where the herdsmen of the garrison fed their sheep and oxen to supply meat and wool for the soldiers ; and in the valley below you will find, if you dig deep down, the graves where soldiers lie.

The whole scene is very quiet now. No bugle notes are heard waking the soldiers in the morning ; no one drills armoured soldiers on the drill ground. There are no sounds of the soldier-smith hammering armour in his forge ; the camp cobbler's shop has long since lost its roof. The building where the general worked is level with the ground. No messengers gallop behind the wall to carry messages from camp to camp. The Roman soldiers and their enemies the Picts have long been dead, and the only sound to be heard comes from the wind or the bleating of the sheep.

While the soldiers on the wall shivered in the cold north weather, or strained their eyes in the darkness to detect the Pict creeping up to attack, the inhabitants of Southern Britain lived in quietness. They made up their minds to dress like Romans, have houses like them, speak their language, worship their gods, and enlist in their armies. They even adopted the Roman way of making and decorating pottery, and gave up the beautiful Celtic way. Fine houses adorned with Roman pictures and mosaic floors began to rise beside the Celtic huts on the gravel hill, where London stood above the Thames. For traders came thither from Gaul, and grew rich as they unloaded their cargoes at the wharves on the banks. A wooden bridge was built across the Thames just below the spot where London Bridge now stands. All around London Celts bought, and sold, and tilled the

soil without any fear of war. Any islander who wished to see fighting had to enlist in Roman armies far away. In distant countries, on the banks of the river Rhine or the river Danube, or on the edge of the African desert, the tombstones of British soldiers are sometimes dug up to-day. The Emperor at first would not let them serve in North or West Britain, lest they should help their friends to rebel. But so little did Britons think of rebellion that houses called villas were built in the middle of the country, as if their owners had nothing to fear. In many a spot in Southern England, where villas once stood the plough and the spade now turn up Roman tiles, stones with Roman inscriptions, images of Roman gods, old Roman shoes and lamps, bits of Roman jewellery and household furniture, Roman money, and the heating furnaces of Roman houses. Day by day to these dwellings serfs carried up food, meat, fish, corn, and poultry for their master. Day by day they watched his pigs in the woods, where the acorns were plentiful, or his cows and sheep on the pasture. Corn grew abundantly and ships carried it across the sea. Slaves in factories made cloth, and their masters sold it in foreign lands. Southern Britain was as peaceful and quiet as modern England.

Christian missionaries tramped about persuading the people to accept the Christian religion. Churches began to arise in different places, and you can still see the remains of one or two of these. At first the Christians were persecuted, but at last they were allowed to worship in their own way. But all the Britons did not accept Christianity; many of them continued to adore the old Roman gods, and in many places of our country the foundations of their temples and the altars and images of heathen gods have been found.

In Western England there is a city called Bath. A spring there throws up water as hot as the water in a hot bath. It is good for people who suffer from rheumatism and gout, and many go there to drink it and bathe in it. Bath was a city in Roman times, for Romans had gout like Englishmen, and knew how good the waters of Bath were. Thither the Roman invalids were carried

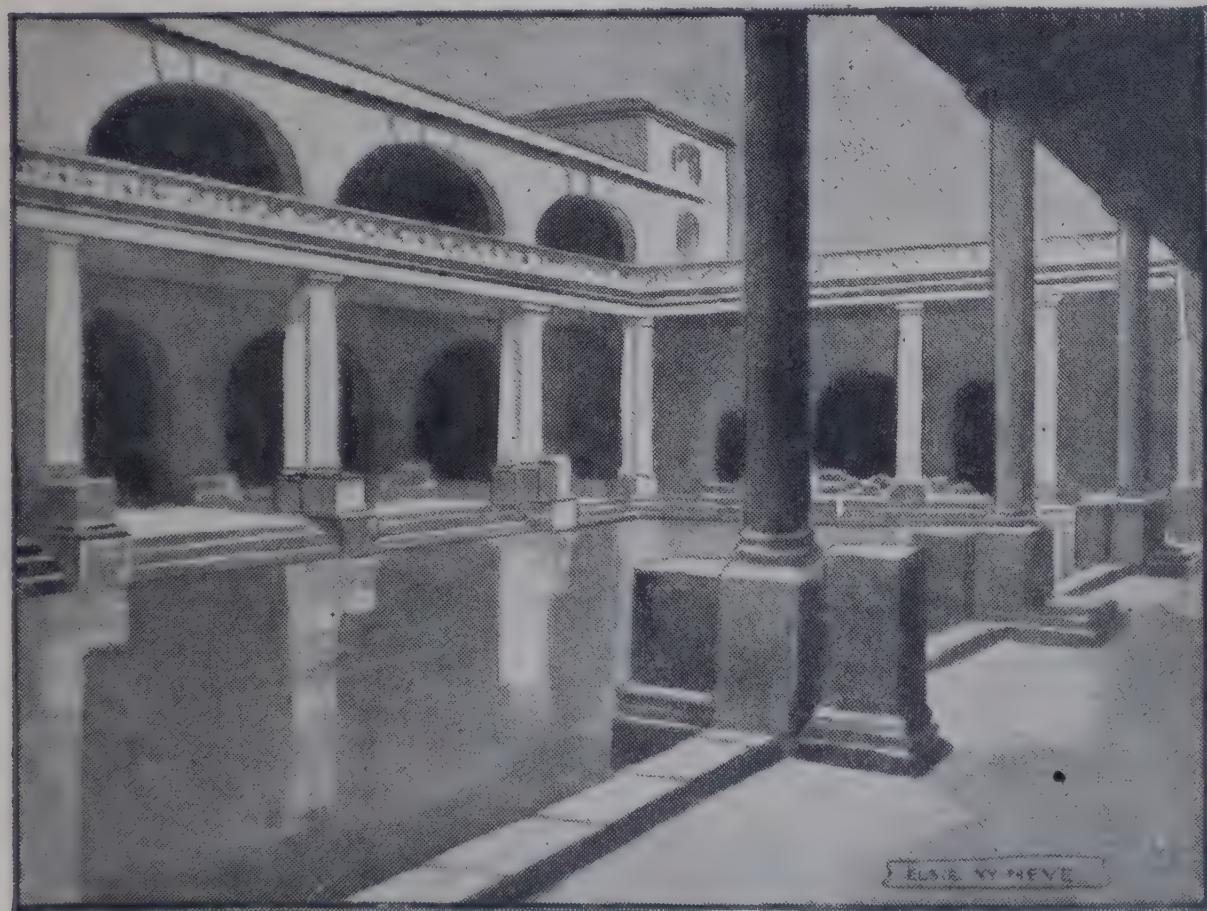


FIG. 10.—Roman Baths at Bath.

in litters ; some were soldiers from far-away garrisons ; others were plain citizens ; some came from lands across the sea, because they had heard of the goodness of the water. Sometimes they swam in the water, and if you go to Bath to-day you can still see the swimming bath. It resembles a modern swimming bath very much. Sometimes the invalids drank the water.

Few places have warm healing waters like Bath.

But every Roman town erected bathing houses, for Romans were very particular to keep themselves clean. The buildings were heated by furnaces, which sent hot air under the floors and up chimneys in the walls. There were also furnaces for heating water. After the bather had been in a warm bath, he scraped himself well with a sort of comb made of bone to remove the dirt and particles of old skin. A Roman did not use soap much. Then he soused himself well with a bucket of cold water, or dropped into a cold plunge bath, to prevent himself from catching cold on going out into the cold air.

For many years there was peace in Britain. But about two hundred years after the Roman conquest a pirate nation, called the Saxons, began to attack the coast. They were tall and strong, and had long flaxen hair. They soon discovered that the British houses had no thick walls to defend them, and that all the Roman soldiers were far away in the north and the west. So many young Saxons joined together to make ships' crews, and came across the stormy North Sea from their homes in Germany. Sometimes they sailed; but they were not so clever at sailing boats as we are now, and often they had to row all the way.

They chiefly attacked the coast which lies between the Wash on the east and the Isle of Wight in the south. There they burned helpless villas, killed the owners and slaves and carried off property. This coastline came to be known as the Saxon Shore, because the Saxons so often attacked it. At last the Romans sent soldiers thither, built castles, and made a fleet of warships for its defence. You can see the ruined walls of one of these castles in the picture. For over one hundred years Roman soldiers watched from these castle walls for Saxon sails or Saxon oars flashing in the sun; at night they strained their ears

to listen for the splash of water as the pirates rowed.

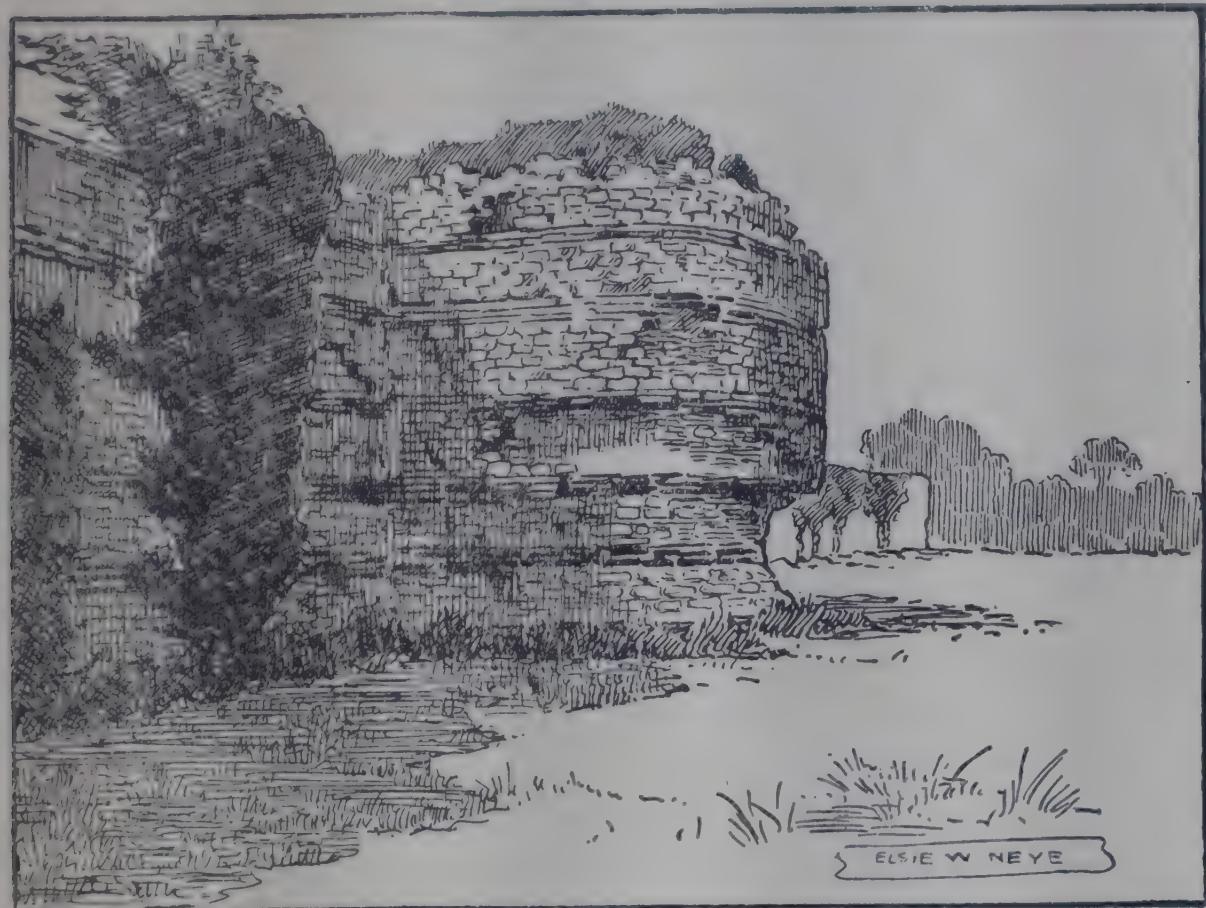


FIG. 11. The Ruins of Burgh Castle; one of the Castles of the Count of the Saxon Shore.

And always the enemy sailed round the coast looking for opportunities to land and steal and murder.

CHAPTER III.—HOW BRITAIN BECAME ENGLAND *

FOR about three hundred and fifty years the Romans fought hard to keep all enemies out of Britain. But at last thousands and thousands of fierce warriors began to attack other parts of the empire. These warriors were of German race, and lived in the great plains and forests of countries which we call Holland, Denmark, and Germany. Between them and the Romans lay the great rivers Rhine and Danube, which were boundaries of the Roman Empire. But they crossed these and entered the Balkan Peninsula, Italy, and Gaul, until in fear the Emperor at Rome sent word to many of his soldiers in Britain to come to his help. Very many more departed in 407, and so at last the Britons were left to defend themselves against their foes. The Saxons and some peoples, the Jutes and Angles, who lived near them, were not long in finding out that the castles on the south-east coast were not properly defended ; the Picts began to swarm across the northern wall. Another war-like race, the Scots, who at that time lived in Ireland, but at a later date gave their name to Scotland, began to row round the British coasts and plunder them.

The most dangerous of all these enemies were the Saxons, Angles, and Jutes. These men were our fore-fathers. Up till this time they had lived upon the

* See P. P. *Hista*, Jun. Bk. IV., Chapter VI.

shores of Germany and Denmark. The Saxons, who were the greatest tribe, had their homes on the flat,



FIG. 12.—The Old and New Homes of the English.

sandy lands about the mouths of the rivers Ems, Weser, and Elbe. The Angles lived further north, in the

neck of land which joins Denmark to Germany. And further north still were the homes of the Jutes, in that part of Denmark which is still called Jutland.

The visitor who journeys to Germany to-day, will tell you that the people who live in the old Saxon lands are very like us in appearance. The coast is a dismal one ; it is famous for the fogs which descend upon it from the North Sea, for the winds that go howling inland, and for the ceaseless fight, which the inhabitants maintain against the ocean. They have had to build dykes, or banks of earth and turf, to keep out the sea. When the tide is high, only the dykes prevent the green pastures from being covered with salt water ; when the tide is out, long stretches of yellow sands are visible, dotted here and there for miles with beds of gravel and pools of water.

The land of the Angles had two coasts, one on the North Sea, the other on the Baltic. There is still a small part called Angeln, after the Angle tribe, which once lived there. That tribe has since given its name to our England.

With joy these peoples heard that the villas and towns of Britain had lost their Roman defenders. Men who were famous fighters gathered together bands of strong young men called "war comrades." They drew their boats down the sandy beaches to the water, flung their weapons on board and pushed off. We know what these boats were like, for one has been found deep down in the soil of Denmark. It is nearly flat-bottomed, seventy feet long and eight or nine feet wide. Its sides are of oak. It carried a crew of about fifty men. When they were at sea they rowed or hoisted sail ; when they came to land they seized their shields and spears, and became warriors. Few men to-day would care to cross

the North Sea in such a boat. But Saxons, Angles, and Jutes came over in thousands; at first they only pillaged.

We know very little about the history of the years when Britain was being plundered. Of course we should like to know a great deal, for the conquerors were our forefathers, and made Britain into England. But none of them could write. Among the Britons there were some educated monks who could do so, but they disliked writing about British defeats. Only one of them, who lived near the time of the conquest, has told us



FIG. 13.—The kind of Boat used by the Invaders of Roman Britain. This one was dug up in Denmark.

anything, and what he writes is short and difficult to understand. His name was Gildas. He says that the Britons were defeated because God was punishing them for their sins.

It was a very dreadful time for the Britons. Picts from Scotland, and Scots from Ireland, and Saxons, Angles, and Jutes were all ravaging Britain at the same time. To-day men have learned many things about the days of the invasions by digging into the ruins of the Roman cities. There was in Roman Britain a city called Viroconium. It stood near the present town of Shrewsbury. Not very long ago men dug into the ground, which once

it stood upon, and learned that it had been attacked and destroyed by the invaders of Britain just about the time when the Roman soldiers sailed away. They found the skeletons of men still lying in the streets, where the barbarians had killed them. Some Britons in their flight had tried to hide themselves and their money in the hot-air passages of their houses, and there they had died. The men, who dug out the foundations of the ruined houses, found the money still lying beside the skeletons.

In Somerset people to-day often find Roman money buried in the ground, and think the owners put it there for safety in the days when pirate Scots were sailing in the Bristol Channel. For some reason the owners never came back to it. Men who examine the ruins of Roman camps say that the barbarians must have destroyed everything, when they at last got inside the walls. Broken altars, statues, grinding stones, spears, swords, helmets, breastplates, boots, coins, bones of men and horses are found heaped in confusion. Villas were burned ; when men to-day dig up their ruins, marks of fire can still be seen upon them. Cities became desolate, and their buildings decayed. Even large cities like London, York, and Chester, which had been very important in Roman times, and are very important now, were left deserted. The only living things in them were wild beasts. The fine baths, which the Romans built in the city we call Bath, gradually filled up with earth and rubbish, and were forgotten. The roads were no longer repaired, grass grew on them unchecked.

At last the Saxons, Angles, and Jutes began to think that places like the fertile land of Kent, the wolds of Norfolk and Suffolk, and the dales of Yorkshire, and many other spots, were much pleasanter to live in than

their German homes. So instead of plundering they began to conquer. And when they had conquered enough land, they sent back to their old homes for their wives and children and cattle. Men say that the first to conquer any part of Britain and live there were the Jutes, who, under their leaders, Hengist and Horsa, defeated the British King Vortigern in 449, and finally drove his subjects out of Kent. Soon the Angles and Saxons followed their example. The Angles seem to have preferred the more northern parts, and the Saxons the southern. Sussex is the country settled by the South Saxons ; Essex is the home of the East Saxons, Wessex of the West Saxons. But Norfolk, Suffolk, Lincolnshire, the Midlands, Yorkshire, and Northumberland were seized by the Angles.

As soon as an army of Saxons or Angles or Jutes had conquered enough land for themselves and their wives and children, they held a meeting. Probably the man who had led them in the fighting presided. In the meeting they decided how the land was to be divided. The army, which had conquered the land, was made up of bands of relations, or kinsmen, who had the same name. Each man kept close to his kinsmen in those days, and wished to live near them. So each body of relations was allowed to take a piece of ground of sufficient size, and settle on it together. They very often gave their name to their village. So Kensington was the "ton" or town of the Kensings, and Effingham was the "ham" or home of the Effings, and Tooting was the dwelling place of the Tootings. There the new English settlers lived, each one of them protecting, and being protected by, the kinsmen who lived beside him.

After this the Picts and Scots gave up plundering Britain. The land was divided between the invaders and

its old inhabitants. The Saxons, Angles, and Jutes, whom we must now call English, lived in the eastern half, and the Britons, whom we must now call Welsh, lived in the west. "Welsh" means "strangers"; it was the English who gave the Britons this name. The Welsh lived in safety for a while among their hills, in the country we call Wales, and in the Pennine range of western Yorkshire. Only a few of them remained in the eastern



FIG. 14.—English Villages round London.

part, which the English had conquered, for the English killed most of them and drove out nearly all the rest. Those who were still alive became slaves to their English masters, and as they were few in number they never taught their conquerors to speak Latin. The German tribes who conquered other parts of the Roman Empire, did not kill or drive out all the people there. So in time the conquered people taught their masters to speak Latin. This happened in the

country of Gaul, which we call France. It is called France because the German tribe of the Franks took it from the Romans, and lived there. The descendants of the Gauls and the Franks are the French, and they all speak the French language, which is descended from Latin, the old language of the Romans.

So the English knew no Latin for a long time after their conquest of Britain. Neither did they use the old Roman cities to dwell in. They did not like the old Roman roads, for robber Britons and bad Englishmen could travel quickly along them, and attack peaceful farmers before warning could be given, and before swords and spears and shields could be brought out. So the invaders did not build villages near the roads,

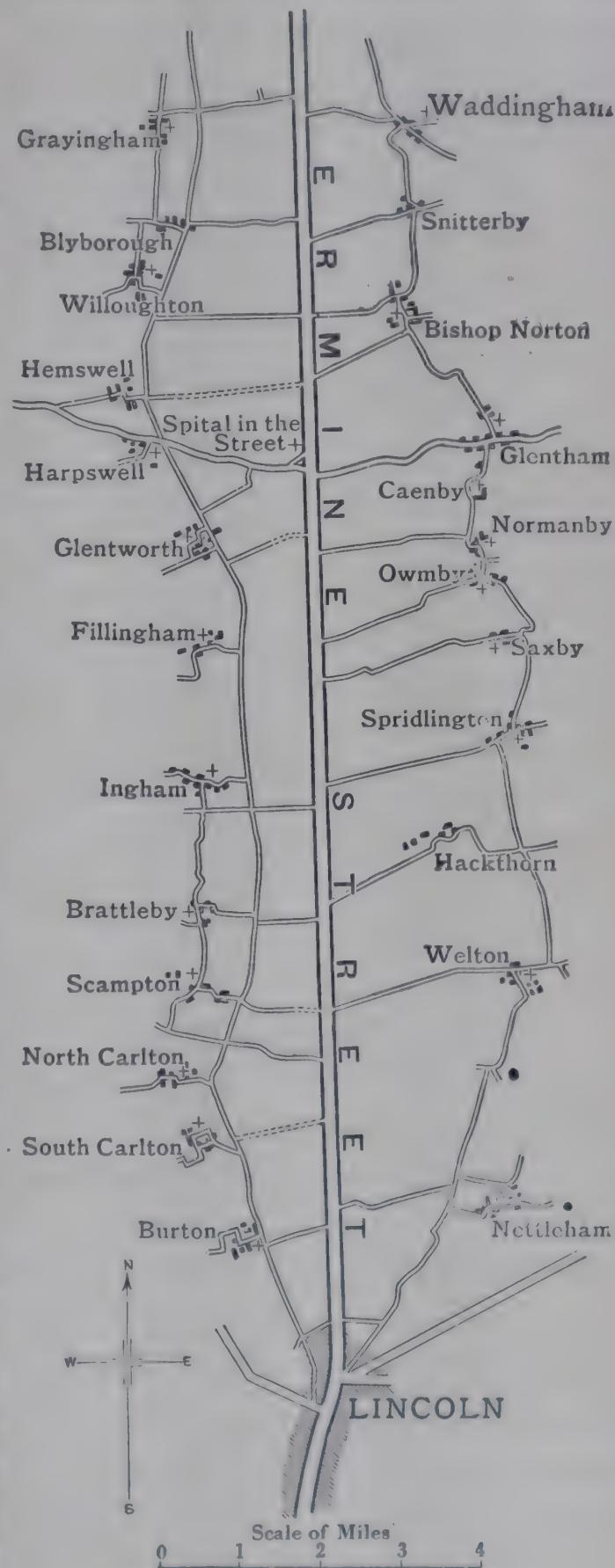


FIG. 15.

Ermine Street is the present name of a road which the Romans made. To east and west of it are marked English village names ending in "ham" or "ton." The villages having these names were founded by the early English invaders, they still exist. The villages which have names ending in "by" were founded about 400 years afterwards by another race of invaders called Northmen.

but about a mile or a mile and a half away in places where there was a good spring of water. The villages of to-day still stand where our forefathers, the Angles, Saxons, and Jutes placed them. So if you walk along the old Roman roads you do not always find villages close to them ; but about a mile or so to left or right you can see the towers or steeples of churches standing up among the trees, and then you know there are villages there.

But there were no Christian churches in the earliest English villages. The British slaves were Christians, but they were too heartbroken and too few in numbers to convert their masters ; so the English worshipped pagan gods for one hundred and fifty years after they came to England. In France, however, the conquerors allowed many more of the Christians to live, and soon learned Christianity from them, just as they learned the old Latin language.

CHAPTER IV.—HOW ENGLISHMEN GOVERNED THEMSELVES IN THE SIXTH CENTURY*

NOWADAYS England, Scotland, Ireland, Wales, and all the British Colonies have one and the same king. But when the English were driving out the Britons there were many kings ruling at the same time in little England. Men say that there were two in Kent, and more than two in Sussex and Essex. So a man could easily walk across a kingdom in an afternoon. You all know how Englishmen in those very early times made a living by growing corn and keeping cows, pigs, and sheep. We must read in this chapter about the kind of government they had.

Englishmen to-day do not themselves carry out the actual work of government. They have no time to spare from their shops and offices, so they pay men to do the work. They pay members of the House of Commons to go to London and help to make laws ; they pay policemen to prevent bad men from breaking these ; they pay judges to travel about and try men who are accused ; they pay soldiers and sailors to fight for them. And there actually are men who, when they have paid their taxes, think that no one ought to expect anything more from them, and grumble very much when, once in a while, they have to act as jury men in a court.

But when England was young, Englishmen had to

* See P. P. Hists., Jun. Bk. IV., Chap. VI.

do many things besides make a living. In addition to being farmers they had to be judges, soldiers, policemen, and, we might almost say, members of Parliament too. That was why relations liked to live in the same village. When there were no paid policemen walking round the country, and no paid soldiers near in barracks, a man relied on his kinsmen to protect him, and so lived as near to them as he could.

* * * * *

Suppose that we are living in a very early English village. A villager called Aelfric has been found by his cousin lying dead of a wound in the fields. The cousin hurries off to tell the other kinsmen, who furiously determine to find out the murderer, and have him punished. They have lost one of their strong protectors and mean to have compensation for him in cattle. The name for this compensation is “*wergild*,” which means “man payment.” If the murderer cannot pay, his kinsmen must, for they too are responsible for the murder ; they have shown themselves to be bad policemen, for they have not kept the murderer in order. Aelfric’s kinsmen determine to have the case tried in a court of justice. Every group of villages has a court which meets under some great tree, or on some open space, every few weeks. All the men of these villages are bound to come to the court and act as judges. One man is elected chairman or president of the court to prevent noise and disorder.

Aelfric’s friends think that Ailwyn from a neighbouring village is the guilty man, and every one knows they mean to accuse him when court day comes round ; so Ailwyn spends the days before the trial in calling on all his kinsmen, and asking them to come to court and help him. Nowadays accused men pay lawyers to persuade the court

that they are innocent. But long ago a man had to ask his friends to do this.

When the court meets, the president calls for order, and Aelfric's friends solemnly accuse Ailwyn of the murder. Then Ailwyn stands up, and solemnly says he is innocent. The president asks him to prove this. So Ailwyn calls on his kinsmen to stand up before all the men in the court who are acting as judges, and say that he is too good a man to have done such a thing. If he had been accused merely of stealing a cow or of breaking into a house, the judges would believe in his innocence, provided that ten men would say he is too good to have done this. You may be pretty sure that if ten honest villagers who live near a man and know all about him, and have heard all the talk about him, say that he is innocent, then he really is so. But Ailwyn is accused of murder, so he must find more than ten helpers. If he can find them he will be declared innocent by the judges. But he cannot, so the judges command that he be tried by ordeal. Every one goes to a pond, and there Ailwyn is bound with ropes and lowered into the water. People believe that if he is guilty, the spirit in the water will refuse to receive him, and that he will float on the top ; but that if he is innocent the spirit will allow him to sink deep into the water. If he floats, the judges will order him or his kin to pay the wergild to Aelfric's kin. They must also pay a fine to the king, for this is part of the punishment.

* * * * *

It was very important that all the men from the neighbouring villages should come to the court to act as judges, to listen to the trial and give orders. For if only a few came, you may be quite sure that the two bands of relations would fight one another with swords, or perhaps

attack one another on the way home. The early English disliked losing time by going to the courts, but they had to go, for there were no paid judges to arrange things at the trial, and no paid policemen to keep order. Very often, however, the neighbours were too busy to go, and then justice was not done.

Sometimes the men had to leave their farms for other reasons. At fixed seasons it was necessary for all men to go to the meeting place of all the kingdom, and there discuss the business of the kingdom, and decide whether to make war or peace with their enemies. There were no paid members of Parliament in those days, so every man went to Parliament for himself, and listened to speeches and shouted, "Aye, Aye," or "No, No." If he talked sense he was allowed to make speeches too. The name of the Assembly at which all men met was the Moot.

Sometimes it was war that called men away. When the king's messengers came ordering the army of the kingdom to collect, every man had to take his spear and shield from his cottage wall and hurry away. Perhaps the war would last a week, and during that time his wife and boys and girls had to look after the farm. When he was at war he liked to march, sleep, and fight beside his father, brothers, cousins, and uncles, for he knew they were less likely than strangers to desert him if he were attacked. So you see how much every one depended on his relations in those days. Sometimes, nowadays, people do not know their relations, and never go to see them. That is because other ways have been found of doing what relations used to do.

One result of not having soldiers and policemen and judges to pay was that taxes were light. At that time coins were scarce, and people paid taxes in corn, eggs,

and other food. They were paid to the king, for he had a large court, and many war comrades and servants, such as cooks, butchers, stable boys, messengers, harpers, jugglers, luggage carriers, and others ; without these food taxes the king and his court would have starved. But in a country where roads were very bad, and where taxes were paid in food, it was difficult to send the taxes to the king. In early English times the king travelled to where his taxes were, and ate them up. In order to live in this way, he had many houses scattered about his kingdom. When the king arrived at a house all the neighbourhood took eggs, corn, salt beef, honey, ducks,



FIG. 16.—Nobles feasting.

salmon, geese, cheese, pork, firewood, beer, and other things to it. The king and his servants stayed as long as the food and drink lasted, and then went on. His servants of course were supposed to examine the quality and quantity of everything, and if the neighbourhood had only supplied enough food for two days instead of three, some explanation had to be given. We may be sure that knaves who tried to escape payment of taxes would be caught easily when kingdoms were small.

So the rulers in early times did not do nearly so much for their subjects as they do now. They did not look after the education of the children. There were no schools and no inspectors. And the king had no Post Office to carry his subjects' letters. The king's servants

had no telegraph or telephone to look after ; they did not watch over the safety of men who worked for wages, as His Majesty's Inspectors of Factories and Mines look after it to-day. Neither did they pay Old Age Pensions, nor gather and maintain a navy. They did not keep an army always ready. Neither had they a huge War Office full of officers, clerks, and type-writers to look after it. They left Englishmen to look after themselves, and be their own soldiers, judges, policemen, and M.P.'s.

CHAPTER V.—THE CONVERSION OF THE ENGLISH*

WHILE the English were governing themselves in the way we read of in the last chapter, they were pagans, and knew nothing of Christianity. We do not know much about their pagan religion. But we do know that it did not teach them to be kind to all men, as Christianity does. The names of their gods are still preserved in the days of the week ; Wednesday is Woden's day ; Thursday is Thor's day ; Friday is the goddess Frig's day. We know that they also believed in spirits good and bad, which they thought lived in streams, woods, trees, hills, and wells. If a woman in a dairy could not make cream turn into butter quickly, she used to say that a wicked spirit had bewitched it. Often in the spring, when the corn was beginning to grow, the English carried images of their gods from their temples, and led them on carts round the fields. In this way they thought that they would get a better harvest, because the gods would bless the corn. Sometimes the farmer who hoped for a rich harvest placed a loaf of bread beneath the first furrow which he made with his plough. He thought the goddess, who dwelt in the earth, would be well fed in this way, and be able to help the sprouting corn. Charms were

* See P. P. Hists. :—

Jun. Bk. II., “Story of St. Oswald,” “Story of Caedmon.”

Jun. Bk. IV., Chap. VII.

Sen. Bk. I., Part II., Stories of Augustine and Edwin.

used to prevent bees from swarming away to the forests, and to cure stitch, cramp, and sickness.

In the west, however, there were many Britons living, and these were Christians and very learned men. The English called them Welsh, which meant foreigners, and the Welsh of to-day are descended from them. But although they were Christians, they did not try to convert the English. They hated their conquerors bitterly, and were glad to see them worshipping pagan gods. Because of this they thought the English would be kept out of heaven. So the Welsh in those days were not such good Christians as they should have been. There were Christians in Ireland also, but at first, like the Welsh, they sent no missionaries to the English.

At last a change came. Far away in Rome lived a man called Gregory, who loved to send missionaries to preach to the heathen. He became Bishop of Rome, or Pope. One day, before he became so great, he found some merchants selling slave boys in the market-place of Rome. He was pleased with their fair hair and skins, and he asked what nation they belonged to ; he was told that they were Angles. Then in joke he made a pun, and said they were like angels. He wished at once to go himself, and preach to the Angles or English in their own homes, but was not allowed to do so. But when he became bishop, he sent a monk called Augustine, and some others, to win the English from paganism to Christianity. This happened in 597 A.D.

By this time the number of kingdoms in England was smaller than it had been, and each kingdom was larger. We can make a map, and show what these kingdoms were. If you look at the map, you will see a kingdom called Kent. Augustine sailed across from France, and landed there. At that time a king called Ethelbert was

reigning. Augustine asked to be allowed to speak before the king, and received permission. Ethelbert took his seat in the open air, because he feared that the new-

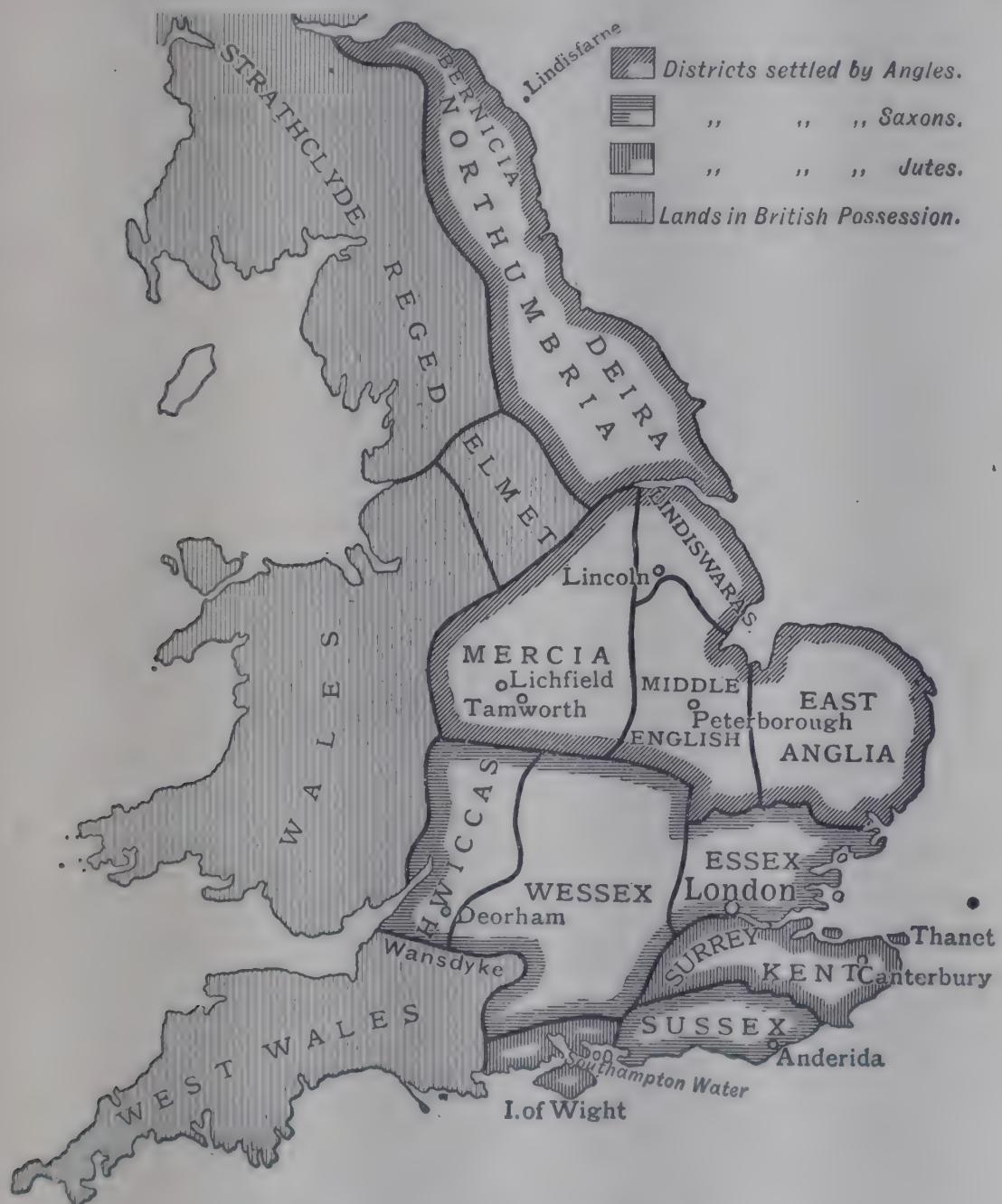


FIG. 17.—England in 597 A.D.

comers were magicians, and would hurt him if he met them in a room. Then he sent for the missionaries. They came before him in procession, carrying a silver

cross and the image of Christ painted on a board. Ethelbert listened carefully, and, in a short while, decided to accept the new faith. He allowed the missionaries to meet to worship God in an old Roman church outside Canterbury, which was the capital town of Kent. Soon he gave them a home even inside the city, and rejoiced to see his subjects becoming Christian like himself.

Augustine was made chief of the Christians in England, and was called Archbishop. His principal church, or cathedral, was built in Canterbury. There is still a cathedral there, and the Archbishop of Canterbury is to-day the chief clergyman of the English Church. The present cathedral is a beautiful building of stone, but the first one, we may be sure, was very small and roughly built.

Christian missionaries went from Kent to the kingdoms of Essex and East Anglia. A church was built in London, which was a part of Essex in those days.

In 625 A.D. the new religion spread even into the distant kingdom of Northumbria where Edwin ruled. For, although Edwin was a pagan, he sought to marry the Christian daughter of King Ethelbert. When she went north, she took with her a missionary, called Paulinus, who laboured hard for many years to convert the Northumbrians, and baptised many of them in the river Yeavering in Yorkshire. He had no churches to preach in ; he gathered hearers about him at the foot of a wooden cross, which he carried with him across moors and through forests. At last he persuaded King Edwin himself to become a Christian. But while Paulinus' work was still unfinished, a pagan king, Penda of Mercia, and his allies the Welsh, defeated and slew Edwin in battle, and Paulinus fled south to his old home in Kent.

It was not long before other missionaries came to

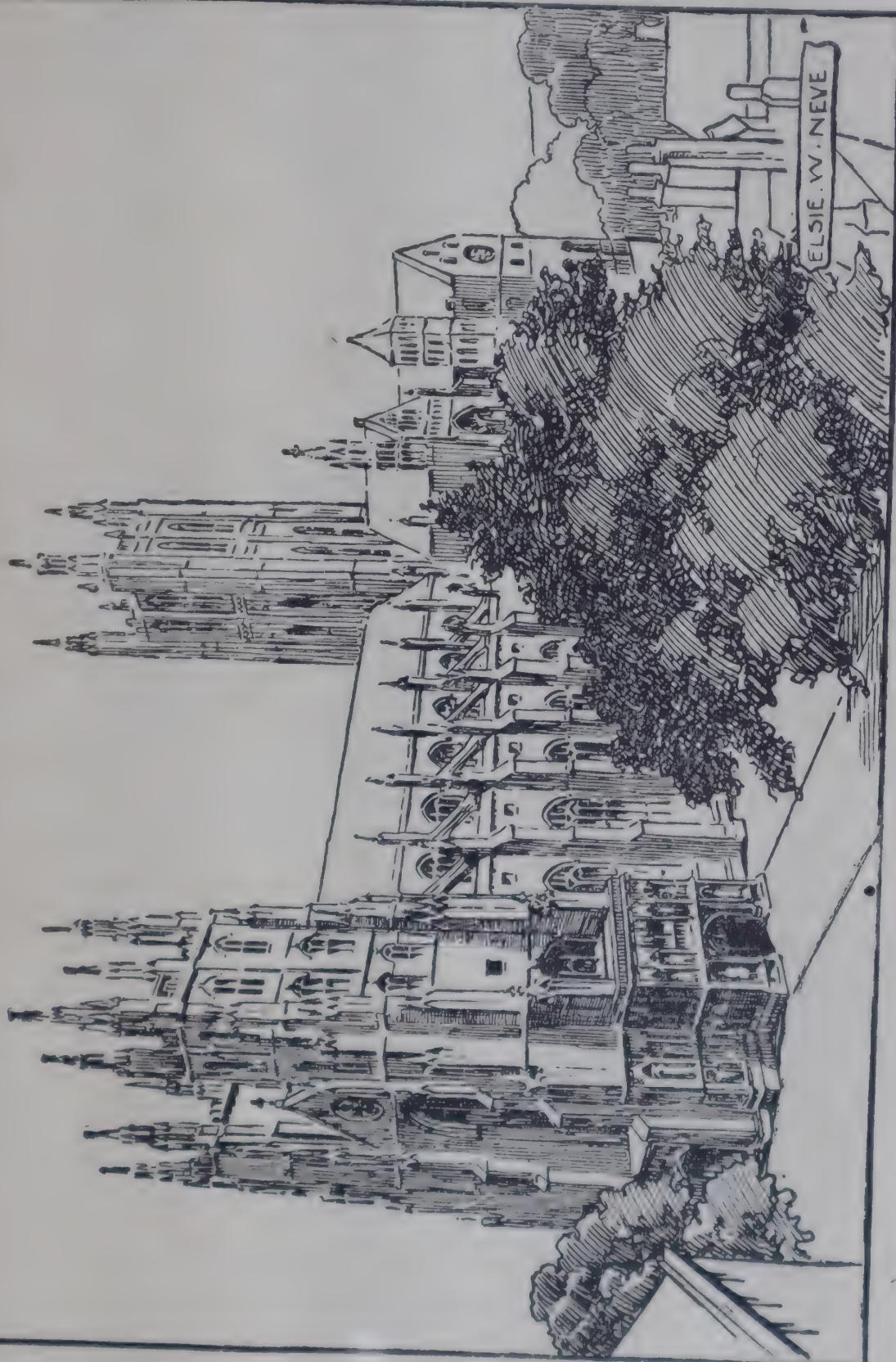


FIG. 18.—Canterbury Cathedral to-day.

Northumbria to take his place. This time they came from Scotland. In the fringe of islands, which lies

between the west coast of Scotland and the deep waters of the Atlantic, is the little island of Iona. It is about three and a half miles long, and about a mile and a half wide. Most of its western shore is formed of rocky cliffs, which offer a bold front to the Atlantic storms. The eastern shore is the most sheltered; along it runs a



FIG. 19.—Old Churches on the Island of Iona.

They were built centuries after Columba's time. The one in the distance has been repaired and services are again held there. The nearer building is the older one; its style is Norman. It was built in the eleventh century by Queen Margaret of Scotland, who was granddaughter of Edmund Ironside, king of England after Ethelred the Redeless.

stretch of dazzling white sand. Here and there on the island are little grassy dells. Rocky knolls rise in places. Scotsmen and Englishmen regard Iona with reverence; to this day hundreds of visitors every year land upon its shores; for it was from this little spot that a great part of Scotland and of England learned Christianity. In the year 563 a Christian from Ireland, Columba by name, chose it

as a peaceful spot wherein to pass his days in making prayer and praise to God. A band of Irish monks gathered round him, and he became their abbot or ruler. The mainland of Scotland was inhabited by fierce pagan tribes akin to the Britons. To them he sent out missionaries, and from this time onwards Northern Scotland slowly became a Christian land. One day while Edwin was ruling in Northumbria, a Northumbrian prince, Oswald by name, came to Iona. He begged Columba to let him live there because Edwin had driven him from his home. In Iona Oswald learned to be a Christian. After Edwin's death he returned to help the Northumbrians against their foes. He was made king, and one of his first acts was to beg the abbot, who ruled Iona in Columba's place, to send him missionaries. At his call Aidan was sent in 634. The newcomer knew little or nothing of the English tongue, so Oswald had to stand beside him as he preached, and interpret his message to the people.

Aidan, like Columba, chose an island to live on. It is called Lindisfarne. It is an island only when the tide is high, for at low water men can cross on foot to the mainland. Here, like Columba, Aidan gathered missionaries about him, and hence they started on their journeys to convert the people on the mainland. The island is about two miles across ; it is for the most part flat, except for a lonely peak of grey stone, now crowned by the ruin of a castle. Stormy winds and seas beat upon it, but to Aidan and his monks it was a peaceful place, suitable for prayer and meditation, and safe from the warfare, which sometimes broke out in the neighbouring kingdom.

When Paulinus fled home to Kent many Northumbrians, whom he had converted, had become pagans

again, so Aidan and his missionaries had much work to do. Had you lived in Northumbria in those days, you would have seen them tramping barefoot over the wild hills, entering the little lonely villages, and preaching to the people. Everywhere they were welcomed, for men were tired of the old religion, and eager to hear of the new. Since the time of Paulinus they had thought much about what happened after death, and because the new religion told them about a future life in heaven, and made men good like Aidan and his helpers, they very willingly accepted it. They thought that the new religion would make better men than the old one, and that life would be much easier for every one in consequence. For a real Christian does not steal things, nor kill, nor wound any one, nor tell lies, nor do harm. And Englishmen hoped that with Christianity all these horrid things would begin to disappear. They were right in thinking this, but perhaps they expected the change to take place very quickly. Instead of that it is still taking place very slowly. So Englishmen listened eagerly to the missionaries, and soon all the kingdoms had heard the gospel preached, and determined to follow Christ. The little kingdom of Sussex was the last to desert the pagan gods, but by 681 that kingdom had also become Christian.

So part of England was converted by men from Rome and part by men from Iona. The chief city of the Roman missionaries in England was Canterbury, and their chief man was the archbishop there. All difficult questions were sent to him to be settled ; and if he was not able to deal with them he sent them to the Bishop of Rome, who was called Pope. But the chief man of the Scottish missionaries was the Bishop of Lindisfarne ; and over him was the Abbot of Iona. So there were

two Churches in England, the Roman and the Scottish. The people of Kent, East Anglia, and Wessex had priests and bishops of the Roman kind ; those of Northumbria, Mercia, and Essex had priests and bishops of the Scottish kind. Although the Scottish and Roman Churches both worshipped Christ, there were differences between them. One difference, which they thought very important, was this : they celebrated Easter on different Sundays. There was another difference. The Scottish monks were always fasting for very long times, or performing penance by doing very unpleasant things. The Roman monks and priests were not so cruel to themselves. They thought more about building beautiful churches, having beautiful services in them, and putting stained glass in their windows and collecting books. Of course they were very careful to do penance too, but not in such painful ways.

Englishmen disliked having two Churches in the land. Nowadays we have many different Churches ; we have the English Church, the Roman Catholic Church, the Presbyterian, the Methodist, the Congregationalist, the Baptist, and others. But in older times men hated to have even two Churches, and wanted all to belong to one. So in 664, at Whitby in Yorkshire, it was agreed that the Pope in Rome and the Archbishop in Canterbury should rule all the English Christians ; and the Bishop of Lindisfarne and many of his missionaries went sorrowfully back to Iona. All resolved that the Archbishop of Canterbury should be archbishop, even over the kingdoms which the Scots had converted. Soon even Aidan's name was quite forgotten, but Oswald's was remembered.

It was, perhaps, a good thing that England adopted the Roman way, for men in Rome knew more than men in the little island of Iona. Rome was a great city, and

men who travelled thither from England passed through many lands, and met many good and learned men, and also many who knew how to govern Churches and kingdoms. They made friends with these men, and wrote to them for advice after they had returned home. They saw great buildings, libraries, fine pictures. For the countries through which they travelled on their way to Rome had been Christian for hundreds of years. So it was good for Englishmen who had not long been converted to see them. But if an Englishman travelled to Iona, he saw few men who could govern kingdoms well, and very few who could govern Churches. Most of the men he met on his journey were wild and rough. He saw no great cities and no wonderful buildings. Until he came to Iona he met few learned men. The buildings in Iona were roughly made and very small. A man who had been to Rome would have laughed at them ; but the missionaries from Iona were saintly men.

When the Pope at Rome heard of the decision made at Whitby, he sent a very learned man called Theodore to be the first Archbishop of all England. This man saw what to do. A Church, like a school, needs people to make rules, and see that they are obeyed. The men who do this in a Church are called Bishops, and their chief is an Archbishop. There were some bishops in England when Theodore arrived, for some of the first missionaries had been made bishops ; but Theodore made many more. Each of them had a piece of England to look after, and each piece was called a diocese. It was the bishop's business, as it is the business of bishops to-day, to admit new members to the Church by confirming boys and girls who had been baptised as babies. Once a year Theodore arranged to have a council of all the bishops, and some other holy men, to draw up rules for

managing the Church. He established very good schools, so that men could be trained to be priests, and then be sent to the villages to teach people how to worship God and how to lead a Christian life. In his time men came from Rome to teach Church music and many other things connected with Church services.

Theodore and his bishops decided that Englishmen were to be punished unless they behaved like Christians. Of course the courts had always punished men for murder and theft, but Theodore said other things must be punished, such as absence from church on Sunday, hunting, buying and selling on Sunday, feasting when the priest ordered men to fast, failing to bring children to be baptised, evil speaking and lying. If men or women sinned very badly the priest forbade them to come to church until they had confessed their guilt to him, and had been punished by fasting or penance.

We may be sure that every man paid something in food or money to the church. For the priest must have something to live on, and something to give to the poor. In later times we know that each man gave a tithe, which means a tenth of all his corn, sheep, cattle, and other produce to this priest. This was a very heavy tax indeed, and there was a good deal of grumbling about it. In Theodore's time men began to build churches. Formerly there had been only a very few. Missionaries had usually set up a cross, and preached at the foot of it, once or twice a year. But in Theodore's time many men came from his



FIG. 20.—An old Preaching Cross.

schools, and settled for life as priests in the villages. The churches that were built for them were probably

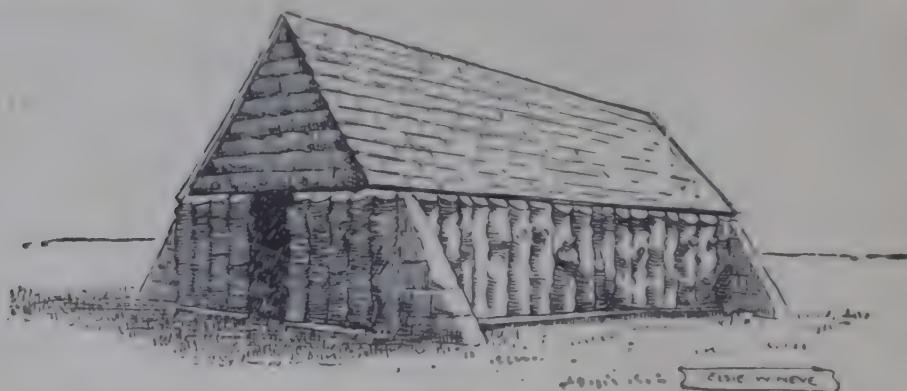


FIG. 21.—What a very early English Church may have looked like.

very small, large enough perhaps for ten or twelve men



FIG. 22.—An old English Church at Bradford on Avon. It was built between 950 and 1066 A.D.

to kneel at prayer. It was part of the work of each bishop to visit these churches, and see that they were

properly repaired. He took care that the priests, who held services in them, did so in the right way, and told their people what to believe, and punished them according to the rules, if they sinned. The village in which a priest worked was called his parish. Gradually many villages began to have priests, and the villagers began to know more about their religion, and lead better lives.

The Christian religion helped the English in many ways. It made it easier to do justice. If a man were accused, like Ailwyn in the earlier chapter, he liked to find people who were regular churchgoers to come before the court, and say that he was too good a man to have done the wrong he was accused of. For the court more willingly believed a churchgoer, especially one who went to Communion regularly. The Church helped in another way to get justice done. Sometimes a man discovered that some neighbours were accusing him of crime, and meant to kill him, or punish him without waiting for a court day. Then he fled to a church before they could catch him. His enemies did not dare to drag him out by violence, for the church was God's house. So the fugitive's friends could come to him, and protect him. And at the next court day the case could be settled by law in the proper way.

Pagans often inflicted very cruel punishments on one another, such as cutting off hands and putting out eyes.

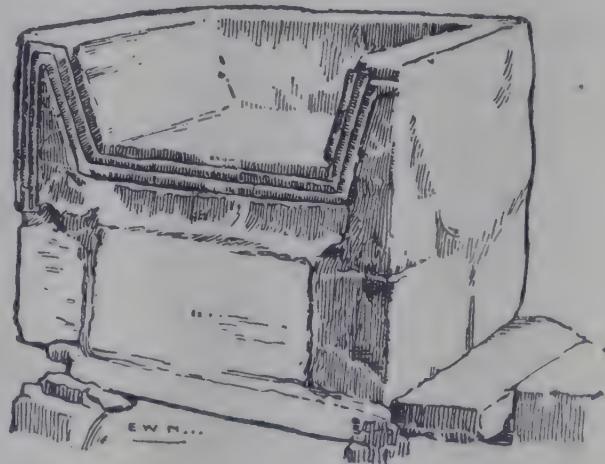


FIG. 23.—A Frith Stool or Peace Chair.

At Hexham Abbey Church. Any fugitive who was sitting in this chair was safe from his enemies. It was made in Saxon times.

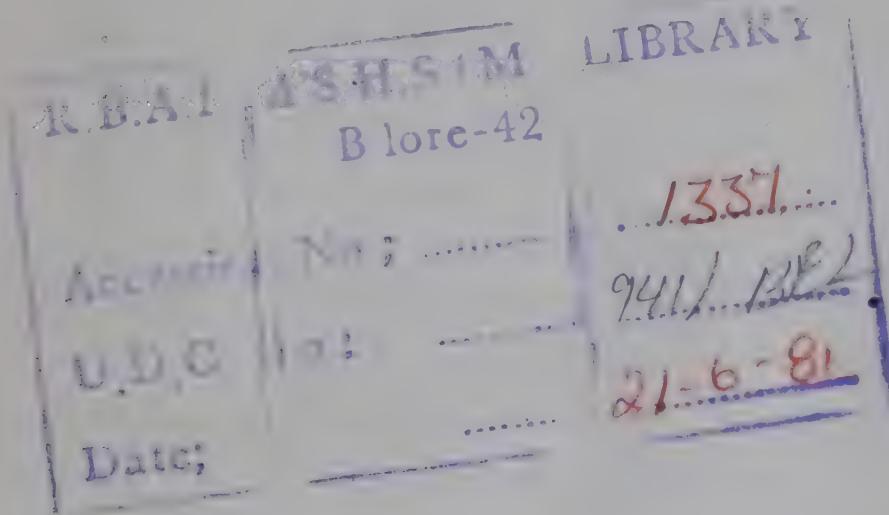
But in English laws passed in Christian times this is forbidden. It was said that Christ had bought all men by His death on the Cross, and therefore the bodies of the men for whom He had died should not be mutilated. And Englishmen began to hate slavery. Bishops preached against it, and many slaves were freed. The laws, too, were better obeyed, because the wrongdoer knew that even if he escaped punishment in this life, God's eye was on him everywhere. Life became happier, for whatever misfortunes a good man had, he remembered what the priests told him about a future life in Heaven, where his dead friends were dwelling in peace and joy.

Schools became numerous. Men began to write history. At Jarrow, in a monastery on the coast of Northumbria, lived Bede, who is called the father of English history. He tells us nearly all we know of the conversion to Christianity. Partly because of his writings it is possible to make a map of the English kingdoms which existed at Augustine's coming. Beautiful music began to be sung, instead of barbarous songs. At Whitby in Northumbria the herdsman, Caedmon, sang the story of the creation of the earth. He was the first Christian poet in England. Men began to lose their fear of witches and of all the weird spirits which they thought haunted trees, fens, rivers, and bogs.

But even after Englishmen had become Christians they kept some of their heathen ways. They still believed in dragons and witches ; they often thought they could hear them flying through the midnight air. They still called the days of the week by heathen names. They often worshipped spirits like water-elves who dwelt in springs ; sometimes, had you been alive then, you might have found gifts of food placed by the well, so that the water-elf might eat. No one liked to pass dark pools

in the night-time. Dairy maids still believed in fairies. Ploughmen following their plough still sang the old pagan songs, buried loaves in cornfields, and called to the old pagan gods to give them good crops. No doubt, when they saw the priest coming round the corner of the wood, they hushed their voices, and hoped that the burial of their loaf of bread had not been seen. Nor did they after their conversion at once forget the way to the temples of the old gods. When misfortune came upon them they remembered their old religion.

But slowly, after long years, old ways were forgotten, and even from the very first Christianity made men kinder, more honest, more truthful, and easier to govern.



CHAPTER VI.—HOW THE ENGLISH GAVE UP GOVERNING THEMSELVES

TO-DAY England, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland are all under one king. Across the seas there are many other lands like Canada, South Africa, Australia, New Zealand and others, which have the same king. But when the English first came to England, they formed many little kingdoms in the eastern parts, and the Britons had many little kingdoms too. Then kingdoms began to join together, so that when Augustine came in 597, they were fewer in number, and bigger in size than before. If you look at the map on page 41 you will see what those kingdoms were.

After the time of Augustine the English went on fighting against the Britons or Welsh, and against one another, until there came to be three big kingdoms, Northumbria, Mercia, and Wessex, and three smaller ones, East Anglia, Essex, and Kent. The kings of the big kingdoms were always trying to be masters of one another and of the little kingdoms. When any one conquered other kings in battle, and made them do his will, he was called Bretwalda. First the king of Kent, Ethelbert, was Bretwalda ; but his kingdom was rather small. So, in time, kings of Northumbria, like Oswald, became Bretwaldas. After them the kings of Mercia became all powerful, and were able to defeat and give orders to Wessex, Northumbria and other kingdoms. The greatest Mercian king was Offa (757-796), who built a great earth wall, called Offa's Dyke, to separate

Mercia from Wales. Then after his death Egbert, king of Wessex (802-839), won the name Bretwalda. All the other kingdoms submitted to him. So Egbert



FIG. 24.—England in 730 A.D.

became a very powerful Bretwalda. Usually he allowed the inferior kings to go on ruling their kingdoms under his orders.

You must not think that a Bretwalda and his servants

were able to rule as well as the king of England and his servants can do to-day. Our king, and the men who help him, whom we call Ministers, have plenty of money. They get this from the taxes, which English men and women have to pay. No one can escape payment. Even if a man lives hundreds of miles away from London, and only owes the king sixpence, he has to pay it. Because money is so carefully collected by the taxgatherers, the king and his ministers can pay servants to do many things. There are soldiers in thousands. The king can afford to feed and clothe them, give them rifles, artillery, horses, tents, carts, medicines and many other things. He has ships and sailors. He has good judges who sit in his courts. If any man enters your house to steal, or attacks you in the street the policemen, appointed with the king's permission, seize him, judges try him, and gaolers punish him.

The king's servants look after all of us. Old men and women, who are too weak to work, and have been too poor to save, get an old age pension. Workers in mines and factories are watched by the king's inspectors, to see whether they are safe from accidents and disease. Poor people who fall ill at their work receive pay for many weeks while they are ill. King's servants carry letters and telegrams for us ; they visit schools to see that boys and girls are properly taught, and that they learn their lessons well.

But the English long, long ago were not governed as well as this. You know how they helped to govern themselves in the days when kingdoms were very small. The kings could watch them carefully then. They could visit all their own houses, and if the food taxes were not properly paid to them there, they could attend to the matter themselves. And if men did not come to the

moot or the army, when the kings sent for them, they easily found out that they were missing, for they knew most of them by sight, or their wise men knew them. Men were willing to fight to defend a kingdom, just because it was small, and because the war would soon be over. The king of a little kingdom could go round the courts, and see that they were properly attended by the people of the district, who acted as judges. In a little kingdom men did not travel far away from home ; they usually stayed quite close to their relatives ; and so they could find people to go to court and help them with the business there, if any trouble arose.

But when kingdoms became larger because of conquest, people soon found out that the old ways of governing, which had worked fairly well in former times, would not work any longer.

The king of a wide realm had more servants than the king of a small one, and so needed more food. So, instead of going round to all his houses where food was collected, he had to order it to be collected at a few places where he could reach it. He needed more food for his armies too. In early days a war between little kingdoms would continue perhaps only for a week, and the soldiers could carry enough food from their homes to last the whole time. But a war between two big kingdoms lasted for two or three months, so the kings had to collect food for their men. All this was very difficult, for there were few good roads. Indeed the only good ones were the old Roman ones, and even on these the bridges were broken, and there were many big holes. The king's servants were not always honest and careful, as royal servants are in our time ; they stole. And the men, who had to pay taxes in food, sometimes sent short measure, or bad food, or none at all, thinking that they

would not be found out. Very often they escaped punishment, because they were far away, or because the king's servants were not good at keeping accounts.

To help them in the government of distant places the kings of the large kingdoms appointed men called Ealdormen. These were officials who, the king thought, would be able to act as good presidents of courts, and would be useful to collect his taxes, and to lead part of his armies. Sometimes they governed badly. When this happened the kings found it difficult to punish them. Writing letters to them, or sending messages, was of no use. If they were far away, they thought that the king would be too busy, or too lazy, to come against them ; for it was necessary to collect an army and feed it, and perhaps fight a battle, before the wicked ealdorman could be punished. Nowadays the king, although he is far away in London, can arrest any one with the help of two or three policemen. But even Bretwaldas could not do that.

In the same way it was very difficult for a king of a big kingdom to collect an army unless he were very energetic, and respected and feared by his subjects and ealdormen. If he were not a king like this, his subjects said to themselves : "Oh, I am too busy attending to my farm," or "I am not very well," or "My son can fight for both of us," or "The weather is bad," or "The war will last too long," or "I shall not be missed," or "I have no proper spear or shield, and no money to buy them with," or "The distance is too great," or "The king has enough soldiers without me, so I shall not go." If a man did go, he often deserted, because he was tired of fighting, or because he wanted to know how his wife and children were, or how his corn and cattle were getting on.

And the courts began to work badly. Men could

not find time to go to courts and act as judges. Often when two lots of relations came to court, to have a quarrel settled, they found very few judges there, and refused to accept their decisions. Often they fought with one another, and settled their quarrels in that way. Thus no wergilds were paid, and kings got no fines.

Now that kingdoms were large men could go and live far away from their kinsmen, and yet be under the same king. When these men were in trouble, they had no one to go to court with them, and help them. And even if a man were living in his own village near his relations, they got tired of helping him. They said to men who asked for help : "Oh, you are always in trouble," or "Your enemy has too many relations, so we are frightened to go," or "There will be few judges, and so we shall probably be attacked," or "You remember what an awful fight there was at the last court." So, because there were no policemen in court to keep order, and because the king was far away, or could not send soldiers, nothing was done ; and murder, theft, and other crimes went unpunished, except when men picked up their own weapons, and killed or punished enemies with their own hands. Wicked men as well as good men did this, so it was a good thing that fugitives could take refuge in churches where their enemies could not touch them.

And the old custom, by which all men of a kingdom went to the moot died out, for the journey was too long. Kings now took advice merely from a few wise men whom they summoned to their courts. The old English word for wise men was "Witan," and the word for a meeting was "Gemot," so a meeting of wise men was called a "Witenagemot."

So the old way of governing, keeping order, gathering

armies, doing justice, collecting taxes, and making laws began to break down. Englishmen were getting tired of doing things for themselves, and began to look round for other ways.

In some kingdoms men were always fighting against one another. This happened because kings could not collect armies to maintain order, nor compel their ealdormen to obey them. Then any man who had money of his own and many friends, might try to collect an army, and make himself king. People who were sick of the bad justice in the courts, and wanted good government, used to join him, because they hoped he would do better. Usually they were disappointed. So there was order only in the kingdoms that had strong kings, who were feared by their subjects and servants. And even they had great difficulty in getting work done properly. Sometimes they allowed dreadful wars to go on in the other kingdoms which they had conquered, and did nothing to stop them, so long as their own kingdom was quiet.

It was when England was so badly governed that a very terrible race of men attacked her.

CHAPTER VII.—THE COMING OF THE NORTHMEN *

A WRITER of long ago tells us that in the year 793 dreadful things happened in the sky. He says that immense sheets of light and fiery dragons were seen rushing through the air. Then came a great famine. Not long afterwards pirate ships attacked the island of Lindisfarne, where Aidan had built his monastery and church. They slew many of the monks. Next year they went against the monastery at Jarrow, where Bede, the first English historian, had lived nearly all his life. His monastery was well built, it had beautiful stained glass windows, painted pictures on its walls, and rare books in its library. But the pirates cared for none of these things. They killed the monks, stole all the gold and silver articles, and burned the buildings. In 802, other pirates reached Iona, by sailing round the North of Scotland. They treated the monks and monastery there as the earlier ones had treated them at Lindisfarne and Jarrow ; in 806 Iona was attacked again and the beautiful beach of white sand was stained with the blood of another massacre.

These pirates came from Denmark, and Southern Norway, and have many different names. Sometimes they are called Danes, or Northmen. But their usual name is Vikings. “Vik” in Denmark and Norway

* See P. P. Hists. :—

Jun. Bk. II., Story of St. Edmund.

Jun. Bk. IV., Chap. VIII.

means a " bay " or " creek." So Vikings means Baymen. They were very skilful boat-builders and sailors. Norway is such a mountainous country that even to-day it is difficult to make roads in it. In early days its people travelled by water. Long, narrow inlets run from the coast far into the mountains. These inlets are called " fiords "; their sides are so steep and high that in some

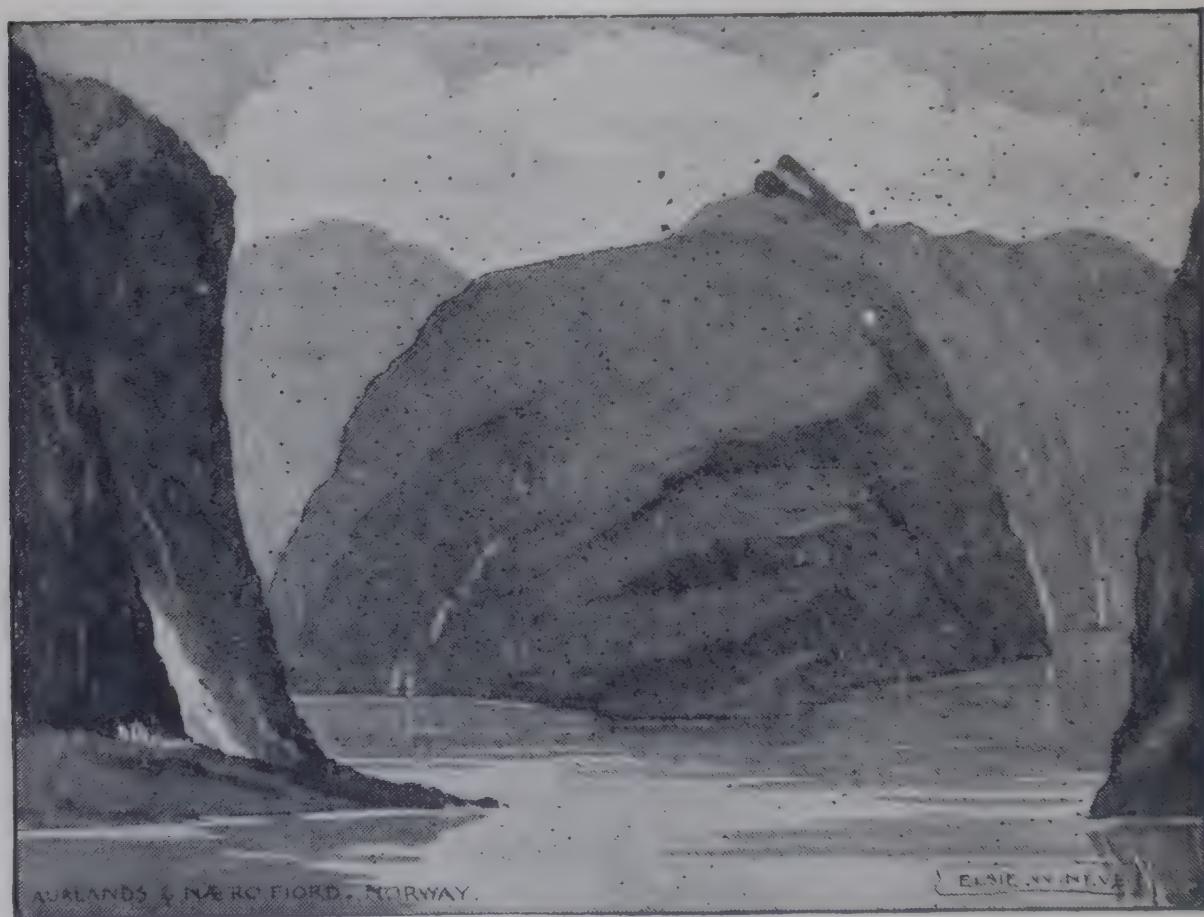


FIG. 25.—A Norwegian Fiord.

places the sun's rays cannot reach the water. At the inmost ends, and on the banks of them, the Vikings built their villages, and to get from one to another they travelled by boat.

The summer in Norway is very short, and it is difficult to get good harvests of hay or corn. The ground is so wet that hay and corn have to be raised on wooden frames and on the ends of poles to dry. So the inhabitants in

Viking times lived mostly on the produce of their flocks and herds. But at the end of the eighth century the population became so large that there was scarcely enough to eat. Then young chieftains who had boats called for friends to join them and go a-plundering in foreign lands. Chiefs and men spent the early months of the year in caulking their vessel's seams, re-pitching her sides, renewing her sails, spars, mast, ropes and oars, and in patching old armour and collecting new. Then when the spring weather came, they dragged their boat to the edge of the fiord, loaded her with food supplies and weapons, and rowed off to the tune of a warlike chorus down the smooth dark waters, while their friends waved farewell from the shore.

The first men who sailed away as pirates collected so much wealth from the monasteries which they plundered, that soon every Vik in Norway and Denmark was sending out crews. The seas were covered with them. They sailed along the English coast, to Scotland, and then through the Pentland Firth. Some sailed southward past the Hebrides to Ireland ; others pushed northward to the Orkneys, Shetlands, and Faroe Islands, and then to Iceland and Greenland. Colonies of them settled in all these places. Some of them even sailed from Greenland and discovered America five hundred years before the time of Christopher Columbus. They called their new discovery Vinland, because they found wild vines growing there. Other Vikings sailed along the coast of France and Spain, through the Straits of Gibraltar, and into the Mediterranean. There they plundered some cities. But most wonderful of all, some Vikings from Sweden, a country next to Norway, crossed over the Baltic sea, and began to conquer part of the land we call Russia. Then they made their way down the



FIG. 26.—Lands visited by the Northmen.

valley of the Dnieper to the Black Sea, built themselves a large fleet, and attacked the great city of Constantinople. They did not manage to capture it. On all the seas that were known to Europe these warriors appeared. As they coasted along they kept a good look-out ; whenever a cape appeared stretching out into the water, they thought they might find a wealthy monastery on the far side of it ; whenever they came to the mouth of a big river, they sailed up-stream, hoping to find on its banks some great city to plunder.

If you could see a ship, in which Vikings sailed on their long voyages, you would be surprised at their daring. One of their vessels has been dug up at a place called Gokstad in South Norway. About a thousand years ago it was hauled on shore, and turned into a burial-place for the body of a gouty old Viking. After he was laid in it, it was covered with earth. When it was discovered in the nineteenth century we learned what a Viking ship was like. It was only 75 feet long ; its greatest width was 15 feet ; its depth at the widest part was little more than three and a half. There were 16 oars on each side, so 32 men could row at once. Perhaps the full number of her crew was 70 or 100. There was no rudder ; the vessel was steered by an oar, or steerboard, thrust over the starboard side near the stern. Both prow and stern were pointed, so that the boat could be rowed equally well backward or forward. When the wind blew favourably the rowers rested, and hung their black and yellow shields over the sides, so that the ship looked like a dappled monster. As the prow of a Viking ship was usually carved to represent a dragon's head, the Vikings often called their warships "dragons." Sometimes the carved prow was shaped like a swan's neck and head, and men came to call the sea the "swan's path." If you had been

in one of these boats on the water and looked over the side you would have been almost able to put your hand in the water. So in stormy weather the salt water splashed on board, and sank to the bottom of the boat, for there was no deck in any part to keep the water out. The Vikings were brave to go to sea in such ships. When storms raged they had to row hard for the nearest land ;

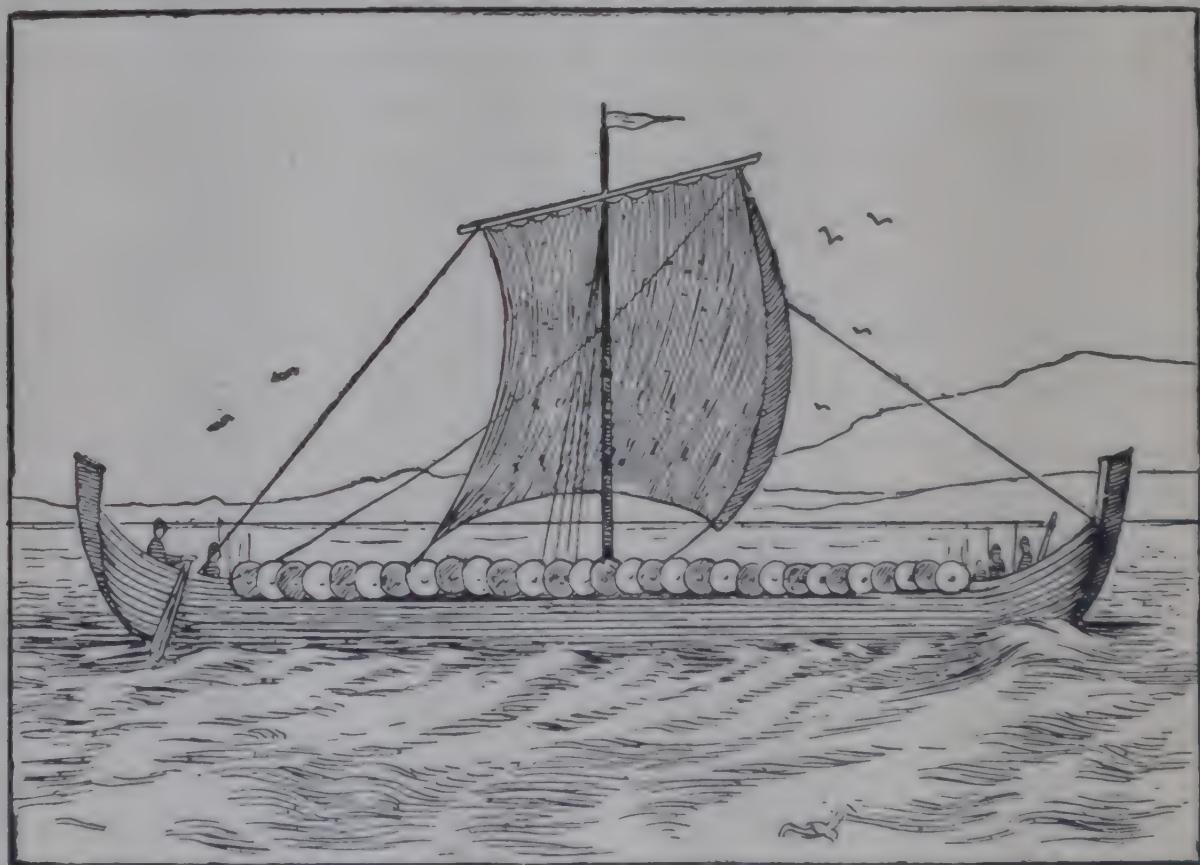


FIG. 27.—A Viking ship when the wind blew fair.

and when they reached it perhaps they would find bitter enemies waiting for them on the shore to kill them, when they were weary with toilsome rowing.

Every Viking was well armed. Many of them had shirts made of steel links ; their poets called them "war nets." Their shields were round and made of wood, strengthened with a knob of metal in the centre. They carried bows and arrows ; the poetical name for the latter was "wound-bees," because they hummed as they flew

through the air, and stung when they landed. Some warriors carried swords, which had been handed down from generation to generation. But most of all they loved huge battleaxes. They seized the axe-handle with both hands, and swung the great blade through the air with terrific force.

They were wild, fierce fellows, fond of practical jokes, and of dubbing one another with nicknames, like "Blue Tooth," or "Splitbeard." Every man among them loved danger. They prided themselves on never showing fear, on never speaking of an expedition as too great, on never sleeping beneath a roof, on never putting an awning over their ships to keep off the dew, and on not spending their days in drinking by the fire-side. For any single one of them to flee from fewer than four enemies was a disgrace. They were great believers in magic and witchcraft; and particularly they watched the flight of ravens, for these they regarded as the messengers of Woden the god of war. They considered that death in battle was the only proper end for a man, and that death in bed was a disgrace.

For some reason the Vikings, after plundering Jarrow in 794, did not attack England again for forty years. They spent all their time in plundering the towns of Ireland, Scotland, and France. Perhaps they did this because the churches in those countries were richer, or perhaps because the French and Irish and Scots were not such good fighters as the English. While Englishmen lived in peace, the people of other countries, dwelling on the coasts or on the banks of rivers, lived in terror, lest they might at any moment hear the steady splash of hostile oars, rowing in time with one another, or wake in the night to hear their roofs burning, and battleaxes thundering at their doors. When the pirates attacked a village,

they first slew the inhabitants, or drove them away ; then they robbed the church and the houses, carried off the priest's costly robes, that were decorated with jewels, and gold and silver threads, seized the silver cups and ornaments on the altar, and pocketed his precious manuscripts, because they liked to look at the coloured pictures. Then they drove cows and sheep down to the ship, slaughtered them there, and put their carcases on board for food. At last they sailed or rowed away, and the surviving villagers crept back to gather together what was left of their property, and face the certain starvation of the coming winter. They would have little corn to eat or sow, and little beef or pork in their salt barrels ; half their houses would be empty.

At last the Northmen became more daring. They began to seize islands in the sea or in rivers, and make camps by putting up wooden fences. Starting thence, they made raids on the lands near by, and to help them to travel quickly they seized all the horses they could find. Soon the camps were filled with food and booty. Had you been able to enter, you would have seen some Vikings turning over and valuing their plunder, some looking at pictures in holy books, some cleaning their weapons, and perhaps even talking to them, for they believed that some swords could talk. Some of them would be feasting and drinking. Many of them could make poems and recite them, and loved to hear of brave deeds, which they might sing about around the camp fires. When at last they sailed away from their camp, not a cow nor sheep could be found in the country near by ; most of the houses were burned, and the inhabitants had been killed or had starved.

Then in 834 the turn of England came once again ; large armies of Northmen began to land. Egbert of

Wessex was Bretwalda in those days, and fought hard against the invaders, sometimes defeating them, and sometimes not. But he died in 839. For forty years after that the bitter fight went on. Wessex never gave up courage, but fought with all her might. There were many men in her army who were equipped only with hay-forks and wooden clubs, and had no helmets nor shields nor steel shirts. Such men feared the Viking battleaxe. But happily Wessex had plenty of wealthy and patriotic nobles, who were as well armed as their foes, and who fought well for their country. So at last the Northmen began to let Wessex alone.

They found it easier to do what they liked in East Anglia, Mercia, and Northumbria. These realms, after collecting one army each and being defeated, usually gave up fighting, and allowed the enemy to march where it pleased without resisting. So sometimes the Vikings spent the winter in York, and sometimes in East Anglia, and sometimes in Mercia. And the kings and people of those realms were forced to send them enough to eat in the great wooden forts which they made in those places. The invaders were beginning to think that Englishmen north of the Thames would never fight them again. Suddenly King Edmund of East Anglia dared to collect an army. But he was defeated and taken prisoner. His captors tied him to a tree, and shot at him till he died. Englishmen regarded him as a saint, and the town where he was buried is called Bury St. Edmunds or St. Edmundsbury. "Bury" in this name has nothing to do with "burial"; it means "borough" or "town."

It seems curious to us that the various English kingdoms did not join together, and so form an army too big for the Northmen to face. Nowadays if England were attacked the whole Empire would help her; but

there was not so much unity in little England in the ninth century as there is in the big British Empire to-day.

Any enemy that tried to invade us to-day would have to get past our royal navy. But in the ninth century the English kingdoms had no navy, so more and more Northmen could pour into England quite safely. And they always knew that, if they were defeated, and had to run to their boats, they would be quite safe if once they were a few yards away from the shore.

At last, in 871, the invaders made up their minds to attack Wessex once more. They got a tremendous surprise ; they had to fight not one battle but nine in six months. Wherever they went they found a West Saxon army waiting for them. In the end they gave up fighting and went away.

In the nine tremendous battles of 871 we begin to hear of Alfred, brother to three West Saxon kings. He fought hard and well, and helped to win great victories. When his last brother died in the course of the year he became king himself. After the Northmen left Wessex he had peace for a few years. Then in 876 they came against Wessex again and were defeated. In 878 they planned another great attack. But that story must be told in another chapter.

CHAPTER VIII.—THE WORK OF KING ALFRED, 871–900 A.D.*

ALFRED became king at the age of twenty-three in the year 871, when the Northmen were attacking Wessex. He is the best loved of all English kings. He was not a very clever man ; his people loved him and all English people to-day love him, because he loved his country, knew how to help her, and never despaired, but worked with might and main all his life. At first he did not find it easy to make his ealdormen obey him, but later on, when they saw how hard he worked for his people's good, those who had been disobedient before, promised to do his will. He was always busy ; he was either fighting, or preparing to fight, by building fortresses and ships, or by collecting soldiers ; he read a great deal, translated many good books from Latin into English, taught in the palace school, judged in difficult cases, which were brought to him, hunted, showed his falconers and hawk keepers, jewellers and architects how to do their work, and was always ready to help, if any one wanted his advice on difficult matters.

He worked so hard that it is surprising to read that he was an invalid. Asser, his friend, who wrote his life, tells us that he suffered from some disease which often caused him pain ; even when pain was absent the king

* See P. P. Hists. :—
Jun. Bk. IV., Chapters IX., X.
Sen. Bk. I., Part II., *Alfred the Great.*

feared that it might return at any moment, and make him unable to work.

He seems never to have done a mean or bad thing even to an enemy. All his life, he said, he strove to live worthily and leave behind him a memory of good deeds. He has done what he wished. He was a good and brave man, and of all things Englishmen love a good and brave man best.

In 871 he had fought in nine battles against the Northmen. In 876 there was more fighting. Then suddenly in January, 878, the Northmen under a leader called Guthrum made a furious attack on Wessex. Alfred, who was probably holding Christmas festivities, and thinking that the enemy would not march against him in the cold weather, had to flee for his life to the Isle of Athelney among the marshes of Somerset. The courage of the West Saxons, who had fought so bravely in 871, now broke down, and for three months the Vikings were masters of the country. Some Englishmen paid money to the enemy ; others fled oversea. But about Easter-time the survivors plucked up heart again, and in a month Alfred found that the fighting men from all the villages round about had been collected by their ealdormen. He was eagerly welcomed when he put himself at their head. Together they fell upon the Northmen at Eddington in Wiltshire, soundly defeated them, pursued hard after them, slew as many as they could catch, shut up the survivors in their camp, and starved them till they surrendered.

Then Alfred and Guthrum made a treaty, called the Peace of Wedmore, after the village of Wedmore in Somerset. The Northmen promised not to attack Wessex again, but to content themselves with the other lands they had conquered in the north and east. In those days

men could still trace the great road, which the Romans had made from London to Chester. It was called Watling Street. It cut right through the very middle

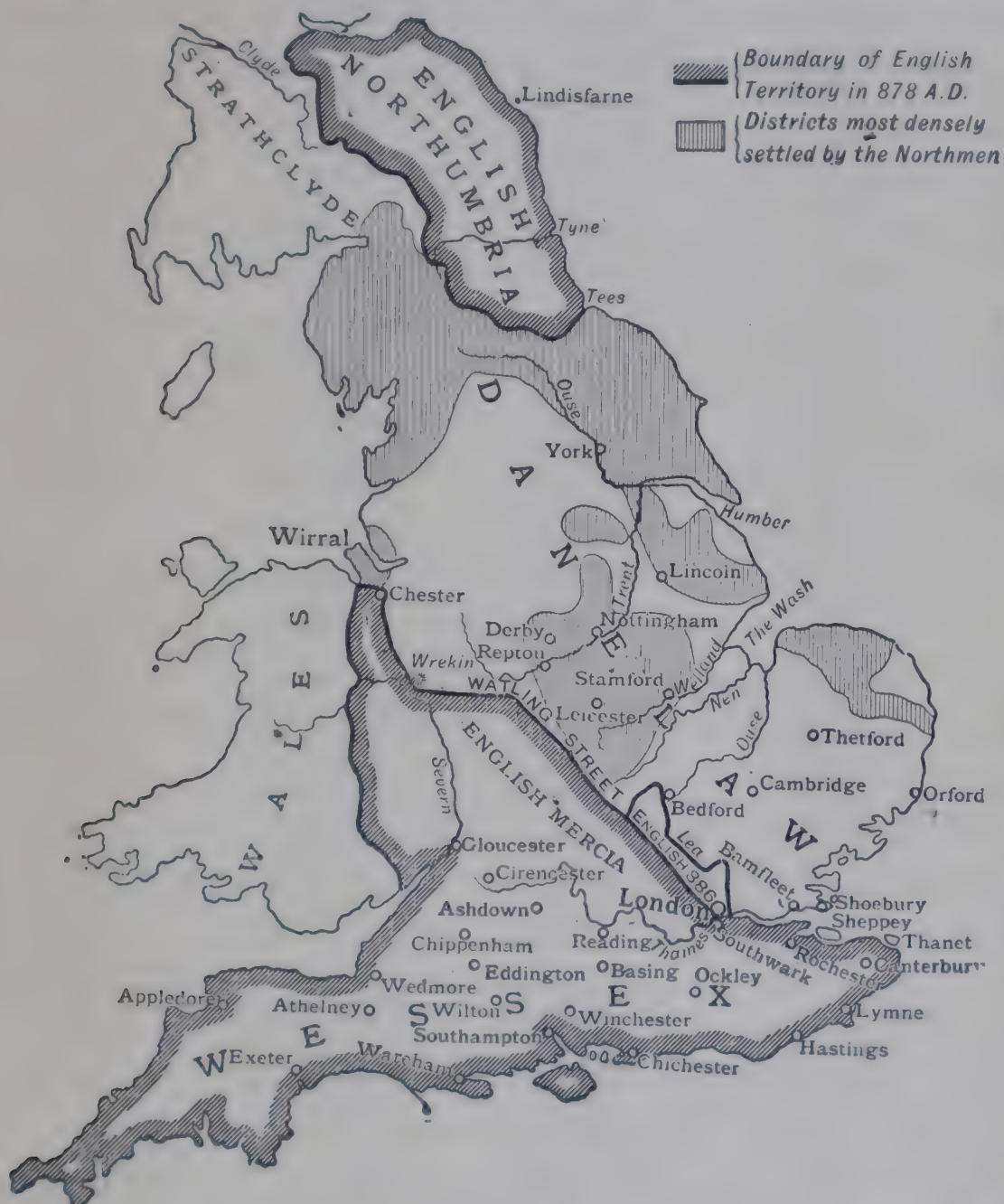


FIG. 28.—England in 878 A.D. Showing the Danelaw and the places where Northmen settled thickly.

of the kingdom of Mercia. By the Peace of Wedmore this road was made the boundary line between the land of the West Saxons and the land of the Northmen. As most of the Northmen seem to have been Danes, the

English called the lands of the Northmen the Danelaw, because Danish law was obeyed there. London was considered to be part of the Danelaw. So Alfred by his victory at Eddington prevented Guthrum from conquering Wessex, and then by the Peace of Wedmore added western Mercia to it.

Guthrum promised to become a Christian. Alfred no doubt was delighted at this, for he thought a Christian would be more likely to keep a promise than a pagan. He led his late enemy to the font to be baptized, and men say that the very font can still be seen at the village of Aller near Athelney. Then after a great feast held at the village of Wedmore, Guthrum and his men marched away. In thankfulness to God for the deliverance of Wessex from danger, Alfred founded a monastery upon the Isle of Athelney. Of the buildings which he put up, not a trace remains. But one relic of that far-away time still survives. Two hundred years ago a piece of jewellery made of gold and enamel was found on the isle. It had an inscription on it in the English tongue, as it was written in those old days. In the English of to-day the inscription reads thus: "Alfred had me made." Perhaps that Alfred was the king we are reading of, and perhaps he lost the jewel when he was hiding for his life in 878 among the swamps and rushes and water-fowl. The jewel to-day lies in the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford.

The Northmen now began to settle down in their new English lands. They gave Danish or Norwegian names to their villages and to the hills and rivers. You can tell by looking at a map which parts of our country had most Northmen living in them. The Vikings' word for a village was "thorp"; a small stream was called a "beck"; a valley was called a "dale"; a waterfall was a "force"; a mountain was a "fell." The names

of their towns often end in "by." If you look at a map of Yorkshire, or Norfolk, or Derbyshire, or Lincolnshire, you can see these words and syllables on it. We still talk of the Cumberland Fells and Yorkshire Dales. Derby is an old Danish town. There are plenty of becks and thorps.

From 878 till 892 Alfred and Wessex had peace, except in the year 886. At that date the Northmen attacked Rochester in Kent, and were driven back to their ships with loss of all their plunder and horses and prisoners by the army which Alfred led from Wessex. In the same year London became an English town again. Except for this fighting Wessex had unbroken peace for fourteen years. But Alfred knew the enemy might come again at any moment, so he thought out plans, and gave orders for making Wessex strong.

It was easier for him than for other kings to do this, for Englishmen loved him more than any king they had ever had. When he ordered them to do anything they usually obeyed. And the cruelty of the Northmen made Englishmen quick to do his wishes. They knew that he was working his best to save the kingdom, and that if they disobeyed him their homes, children, cattle and sheep would fall into the enemy's hands, and they themselves would be killed. But even with many willing helpers it was not an easy thing to make Wessex strong. People had to work very hard, and do many things they had left undone before. And Alfred had to watch everybody very carefully to see that his orders were carried out ; for even among subjects who loved their king, and wished to help him against his enemies, there were lazy men, who shirked their work.

Alfred saw what Wessex needed most. He made a fleet. He built ships, which were nearly twice as long

as the Northmen's ships, and had more than thirty oars on each side, so that they were faster than the enemy's boats. And they rose higher out of the water, so that they could stay out at sea in stormy weather. After this the Northmen were never as safe on the sea as they had been before.

Besides ships Alfred needed good soldiers. He seems to have had three kinds of these. As in the old times, so in Alfred's, every Englishman was supposed to fight when the king called on him. He had to bring with him



FIG. 29.—A King giving orders to his Thanes.

His queen and son are listening.

his spear, helmet, and shield, and be ready to fight on foot. In Alfred's days Englishmen collected very quickly indeed, and marched more rapidly, and fought better than they had ever done before. Although most of them were farmers, they were able to defeat men who did nothing else but fight and prepare for war. This kind of army, in which all Englishmen were expected to fight, was called the "Fyrd." But besides the men of the fyrd Alfred had a second kind of soldier called a "Thane." Thanes were men who were rich in property or lands: the

king expected such men to have horses and good armour, such as helmets, shirts of linked iron, and tough sharp swords. Any man who had about 600 acres of land, or was a successful merchant, trading oversea, received the title “Thane,” and was ordered to hold himself in readiness to come quickly on horseback and in armour, when summoned to war. He was expected to bring other well-armed horsemen with him. These thanes and their followers were much better soldiers than the poor farmers, who marched on foot, and did not have such good weapons.

But there was a third kind of soldier. All around the coast and on the banks of rivers Alfred built forts called “Boroughs.” Southwark, Rochester, Hastings, Chichester, Southampton, and Exeter were boroughs, and there were many others. The chronicle says that they were built “to shelter all the folk.” Each covered about 26 acres. They had walls of earth, with wooden stockades on the top, and ditches running round them. Living inside them, and in the country round about them, were soldiers, whose business it was to defend them against the Northmen, to repair the walls and ditches, and keep a supply of food inside. If the Northmen landed on the coast near one of these boroughs, the women and cattle were to take refuge inside. Then the soldiers or garrison were to rush out, and attack the enemy at once without waiting for any one else. As these borough soldiers were picked men and had good weapons, they were very successful. It was part of the duty of thanes to maintain a soldier, or, sometimes, two or three soldiers in the borough of their neighbourhood. The soldiers were to be well armed; and the thanes usually had a house within the borough in which their soldiers might live. The house was supposed to be well stocked with food and

weapons. The thanes also were responsible for the repair of the wall. Thanes had much to do. When all the soldiers of a borough were gathered, the little army so formed was called the "borough-ware."

At last, in 892, the Northmen attacked Wessex again, just as Alfred had expected, and for four years there was furious fighting. The enemy came from the continent with 330 ships, and received many men and ships from the Northmen who were living in Essex, East Anglia, and Northumbria. But they soon found that it was now very dangerous to attack Wessex, and they became much more frightened of Alfred and his soldiers than Alfred and his soldiers were of them. Very soon they ceased to attack any boroughs. When the fyrd and the thanes were collected, they kept away from them in fear, and hid themselves in great camps, which they made by throwing up rough ramparts of earth, with ditches, to protect themselves. When they dared to come out, the English sometimes caught them, and defeated them, and sometimes chased them so fast that they were glad to get into a camp again. All through the years of fighting the invaders were either flying from the English, or lying frightened and starved in their forts. They were so famished that more than once they ate nearly all their horses. Once Alfred's soldiers broke into one of their camps on the Essex coast, found many of the ships there, and destroyed them. On another occasion the king caught another part of their fleet in the river Lea, by making a great dam lower down the river, so that the ships could not sail down. When small fleets tried to land on the coasts of Wessex, they always found one of Alfred's boroughs near by, and the borough-ware rushed out against them, and hustled them back to their ships. All this must have been a great surprise for the Northmen, so at last they gave up and went home.

No other country in Europe beat them so badly as little Wessex.

You have read of other things which Alfred did, how he gathered teachers together, and set up schools. While the Northmen were burning and plundering there was no time for schooling. The monasteries, where the best schools were, had been burned with all their books, and many of the priests in the villages had been killed ; those that were still alive were poor scholars. Very few could translate the Bible into English from Latin, and explain it to their people. The church service-book, or prayer-book of the time, was in Latin. The priests used to read this out without understanding the meanings of the words. But Alfred in the years of peace brought scholars from the continent, and from Wales, and from parts of England where the Northmen had not been, and set up with their help schools where priests could learn Latin. And he ordered English nobles to send their sons to school to learn to read and write in English and Latin, and often entered the school himself to teach the boys. He was particularly fond of teaching them Anglo-Saxon poetry.

And for people who could not read Latin he translated some good Latin books into English. Pope Gregory, the pope who sent Augustine to England, had written in Latin a book called "Pastoral Care." It was meant to show clergymen how to be good pastors or guardians of their people. Alfred thought that this would be a useful book, and translated it himself into English, with the help of some learned men. Gregory in this book tells priests that just as some medicines cure some diseases, and make others worse, and as bread strengthens men, and is bad for very little babies, so one way of teaching may be good for some men and bad for others. Alfred thought his priests ought to know and remember this,

and all the other things Gregory wrote in his book. Another Latin work by Gregory was also translated ; it was called "The Dialogues." It is full of stories showing that prayers to God, if they are good ones, are always answered.

Alfred also translated a history of the world, written by a man called Orosius. He thought Englishmen would like to know what exploration had been carried out since Orosius wrote his book, so he added to it an account, which one of his own captains gave him, of his voyage round the North Cape, which is the most northerly point of Europe. No man had ever sailed thither before, so Alfred's captain was the Nansen of the time.

In Alfred's time the first attempt was made to write a history of all England. This history is called the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, and tells us nearly all we know about the fight with the Northmen. But Alfred and his helpers could find out very little about the early times, when Englishmen began to conquer England. Almost everything about that far-away time had been forgotten.

Alfred was very anxious to have good justice done in the courts. You know how bad the courts were before the Northmen came ; in time of war they became worse. It is certain that men drew their swords, while trials were going on, and fought together, for we find that it was necessary for Alfred to make a law forbidding this, and imposing heavy penalties on those who broke it. He insisted that all who acted as presidents in courts should know the law, so that they could guide the judges. He helped them by putting together all the best laws of England, and ordered the presidents of the courts to study these. At this time the men who acted as presidents in the courts were the chief men of the counties. They were called ealdormen, and helped in war-time to

command the army. So bluff old warriors, who knew much about fighting the Northmen, and swinging battle-axes, and riding horses, had to set to work to learn their ABC, so that they might be able to read the laws.

Alfred was always willing to help in settling disputes. When men came to him he attended to them immediately. Once some men came when he was washing his hands in his bedroom ; as soon as he had finished he went out and listened to their wants, instead of sending them a message, as some kings would have done, to come at the proper time, when he was seated on his chair in a court.

Think what a busy man he must have been. When he ordered all Englishmen to have good spears and shields, so that they might fight well in the fyrd, he and his officers must have worked hard to see that they did what they were told. When he ordered a borough to be built, he must have sent officers, or gone himself, to see whether it was properly done. And he never knew whether food was being sent regularly to the boroughs, or whether his ships were being built, as he required, or whether fighting in the courts had stopped, or whether the ealdormen were learning to read the laws, or whether his schools were working properly, unless he constantly watched everything for himself, as much as he could.

Nowadays Englishmen do what the law commands, for we have been taught to obey by many stern kings. And our king has many inspectors, who go round schools, factories, mines and everywhere else to see that laws are carried out. But in Alfred's time Englishmen had not learned to obey the laws as well as we have learned. So Alfred needed many very good officials to carry out his commands. But there were very few of these. A good official has to know how to read and write. But you know that at first even Alfred's ealdormen and his

priests could not do that, so you may be sure that the other officials, whom he sent about the country to look after his business, were not very clever at first. He had to teach them everything, such as borough building, ship building, house building, and fighting. He had also to see that they learned to read and write, and knew the laws. He had even to teach his huntsmen, for he knew more about dogs and game than they did. And yet he found time to read good books, and translate them. Was there ever such a busy man ?

CHAPTER IX.—HOW ENGLAND BECAME A FEUDAL COUNTRY UNDER ONE KING *

AT the time of his death Alfred ruled over London, Wessex, and Western Mercia. All the rest of the land was in the hands of Britons and Northmen. But Alfred's son, King Edward (900–924), and King Edward's sons, King Athelstan (924–940), King Edmund (940–946), and King Edred (946–955), continued to fight against the Northmen, and gradually conquered them. Alfred had made Wessex so strong, with a good fyrd, good thanes, good ways of feeding soldiers, and building boroughs, that no enemy could resist successfully. So in time Alfred's descendants became kings of all Englishmen and of all the Northmen, who lived in England. Many hard battles were fought before the Northmen finally yielded. The greatest of these battles took place at Brunanburh in 937. The Northmen who lived in England had decided to make a great effort to win back their liberty from Athelstan, and had called for help to Anlaf, King of the Northmen, who had settled in Ireland, to Constantine, king of the Scots, and to the Britons, who lived still in Strathclyde and Cumberland. At Brunanburh Athelstan and his thanes met the great army, and defeated it. This victory did a great deal to make England into one kingdom, and yet no one knows the place where it was

* See P. P. Hists., Jun. Bk. IV., Chap. X.

won. An Englishman of those far-away times wrote a poem about it in Anglo-Saxon, and Lord Tennyson, who was Poet Laureate in the nineteenth century, translated it into modern English. Here are some quotations from it.

“ Athelstan King,
Lord among Earls,
Bracelet-bestower and
Baron of barons,
He with his brother,
Edmund Atheling,
Gaining a life-long
Glory in battle,
Slew with the sword-edge
There by Brunanburh,
Brake the shield wall,
Hew’d the linden wood,*
Hacked the battle shield,
Sons of Edward with hammer’d brands.†

* * * * *

“ Bow’d the spoiler,
Bent the Scotsman,
Fell the shipcrews
Doom’d to the death.
All the field with blood of the fighters
Flow’d, from when first the great
Sun-star of morningtide,
Lamp of the Lord God
Lord everlasting,
Glode over earth till the glorious creature
Sank to his setting.

“ There lay many a man
Marr’d by the javelin,
Men of the Northland
Shot over shield.
There was the Scotsman
Weary of war.

* Shields were made of linden wood.

† Swords wrought by being hammered on an anvil.

“ We the West Saxons,
Long as the daylight
Lasted, in companies
Troubled the track of the host that we hated,
Grimly with swords that were sharp from the
grindstone,
Fiercely we hack’d at the flyers before us.

“ Mighty the Mercian,
Hard was his handplay,
Sparing not any of
Those that with Anlaf,
Warriors over the
Weltering waters
Borne in the bark’s bosom,
Drew to this island :
Doom’d to the death.

“ Five young kings put asleep by the sword stroke,
Seven strong Earls of the army of Anlaf
Fell on the warfield, numberless numbers,
Shipmen and Scotsmen.

“ Then the Norse leader,
Dire was his need of it,
Few were his following,
Fled to his warship :
Fleeted his vessel to sea with the king in it,
Saving his life on the fallow flood.

“ Also the crafty one,
Constantinus,
Crept to his North again,
Hoar-headed hero.

“ Slender warrant had
He to be proud of
The welcome of war-knives—
He that was reft of his
Folk and his friends that had
Fallen in conflict,
Leaving his son too
Lost in the carnage,
Mangled to morsels,
A youngster in war !

* * * * *

“ Then with their nail’d prows
 Parted the Norsemen, a
 Blood redden’d relic of
 Javelins over
 The jarring breaker, the deep sea billow,
 Shaping their way to Dyflyn * again,
 Sham’d in their souls.

“ Also the brethren,
 King and Atheling,
 Each in his glory,
 Went to his own in his own West-Saxon-land
 Glad of the war.”

Even after their defeat at Brunanburh the Northmen sometimes rebelled. At last, however, there arose a king, in whose reign it was not necessary to fight at all. He was called Edgar the Peaceful, and reigned from 959 till 975 over all the Northmen in the Danelaw and over all Englishmen. No Northmen came from Norway and Denmark against England in his time, perhaps because he kept large fleets to watch the coasts. The kings of the Britons, who still lived in independence in Cumberland and Scotland, as well as the princes of the Welsh, and the king of Scots, promised to be his faithful servants. There is a story that six or eight of them rowed Edgar in his boat upon the river Dee at Chester, as though they were common watermen. Certainly there was a crowd of spectators on the bank to see such a show as that.

During these long wars with the Northmen very important changes took place in the ways of governing England. Historians say that in these years England was becoming feudal. We must learn what that means. The changes, which made England feudal, began before the wars against the Northmen ; but these wars hastened them. When kings are fighting invaders, they need good

* Dublin.

soldiers, and plenty of food, and they need good officers to watch the courts of justice. They have also to find out stricter ways of keeping order, for in time of war, when every one is either flying from enemies, or else busy fighting them, bad men seize the opportunity to rob and murder. They think that kings and other men have no time to watch them, and punish them. Because Alfred and his successors wished to conquer all the Northmen, and at the same time have a well-governed kingdom, England gradually became a feudal country.

In Chapter IV. we learned how Englishmen governed themselves, how every man was a soldier, judge, and policeman. In Chapter VI. we read how they became tired of doing all this, and wanted to be left alone to till their lands. Then a man could not get his relations to protect him against his enemies, nor persuade them to go to court to help him there by swearing that he was a good man. Men would not go to court to act as judges ; so the bands of relations, who might happen to go, fought together, because there were none to keep order. And the kings could not easily get armies, except in Wessex. Neither could they persuade their subjects to pay their food taxes. So enemies were not defeated, courts did not meet, bad men were not punished, taxes were not gathered, and kings had not enough food for their servants.

Some change had to be made ; some new way of governing, collecting armies, gathering taxes, holding courts, and keeping order, had to be found out. The new way was discovered very slowly.

When a man's house was entered by thieves, or when he was attacked and robbed of his cows or other things, he ceased to call to his kinsmen for help ; he appealed to the big man or noble of his neighbourhood, who had many lands, and plenty of servants. He

went to him and said, "My cows were taken from me last night, my kinsmen will not help. I will promise to work for you, if you will go to court with me, protect me there from my enemies, and help me to get my cows back." Then the lord was pleased. He promised to help, if the man would swear always to be his faithful servant, and work for him, or pay him something every year. So when the court met, the man's enemies were horrified to see the great noble there too, asking for them to be punished. They did not dare to draw swords. They gave back the cows. And they did not dare to attack that man again. Other men thought his plan a good one, and went to the lord, and promised to be faithful to him, and work for him, if he would help them too. So many men became the lord's servants, and lived in peace and security.

This happened very very often in the time of the Danish wars, when robbers were everywhere. The king was too far away to help, and he was too busy. But the lord was near, and had plenty of servants, and did what he could. Then the king said to the lord, "You have taken the place of kinsmen, and are protecting many men. You must do the other part of the kinsmen's work ; you must keep these men in order too, and bring them to court to have them punished, if they do wrong." So the lords and great landowners began to do policemen's work.

The kings soon found out that they could persuade the lords to do other things. You remember how Alfred gave men, called thanes, a great deal of work to do. They had to fight when he wanted them, and bring good soldiers on horseback with them, and march quickly. He had to give them something in return. He gave them the title "thane" ; but they wanted more. So he gave them some of his own lands. He said to them,

"There are some lands belonging to me, which the Northmen have ruined. They are near you. Take them, and put men on them to till them ; then you will be able to feed your soldiers, and give them horses." So the thanes collected men, and gave them shares in these lands, and were able to keep little armies of good soldiers. But the men, who got the shares of land, could not do what they liked with them. They were the thane's servants, and had to pay him rent in food and horses and other things. Besides this the king sometimes said to the thane : "You know that all my subjects, even those who live on their own lands, are supposed to pay me taxes in food. The people near you are too far away for me to collect these taxes from them. I will give the taxes to you, for you are near, and have servants who can make the men pay. In return you must send me a share in them, and promise to bring me more soldiers, and fight for me, when I call." So the thane was pleased. Then the men who had given up paying food taxes found that now they must pay.

We begin now to hear of money taxes as well as food taxes. Sometimes English kings used to pay money to the Northmen to persuade them to leave off ravaging their lands. This money was called Danegeld. "Geld" means "money." Even Alfred paid Danegeld. When kings collected this, the poorer Englishmen could not pay, for money was scarce. So they went to the neighbouring lord again, and he promised to pay the tax if they would work for him during one day every week, or perhaps two, at sowing, or ploughing, or harvesting, or thatching, or other tasks.

All these changes pleased the king, for better order was kept, and better soldiers came to fight when he called. He thought he could improve the courts of law

in the same way. He said to a thane or noble, "The



FIG. 30.—Paying Dues to a Lord.

court in your district does not seem to meet now, for no fines ever come to me from it." "No," said the thane, "there have been so many fights, that people will not go to it." Then the king said, "I shall give you a share of the fines, if you will keep order, and see justice done,



FIG. 31.—An old picture, showing men ploughing, and clearing the land for a lord.

and compel the people to attend." So the court began to meet again. And no one dared to draw swords in it, or threaten other men. And the judges were not frightened to decide cases, for if any one attacked them the thane

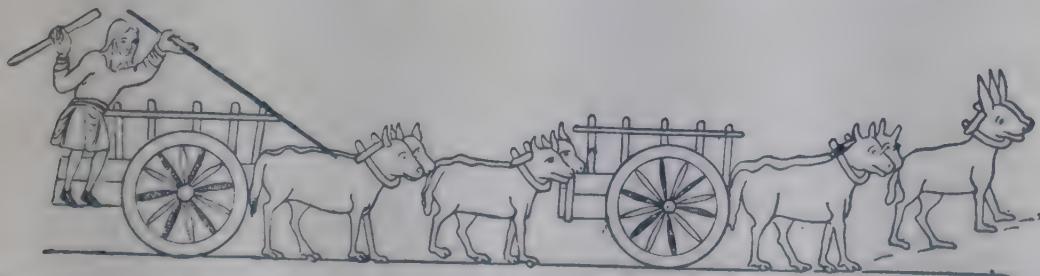


FIG. 32.—Old picture showing a Saxon driving oxen, yoked to a cart.

or noble defended them. If the judges fined a man, no matter how strong he was, he had to pay, for he feared the lord. The lord compelled all guilty men to pay their fines, for most of the money went into his own pocket.

These plans were good ones. They pleased the common people and the lords and the king. But every one had to work harder. The common people had nobles

for masters ; the nobles had to do more than before for the king. And the king had constantly to use all the power of the nobles and people against the Northmen.

In this way, because lords, or thanes with their men, did the hardest part of the fighting, and did policemen's work, and kept order in the courts, and collected taxes, they became the most important people in the kingdom. And the common people ceased to be as important as

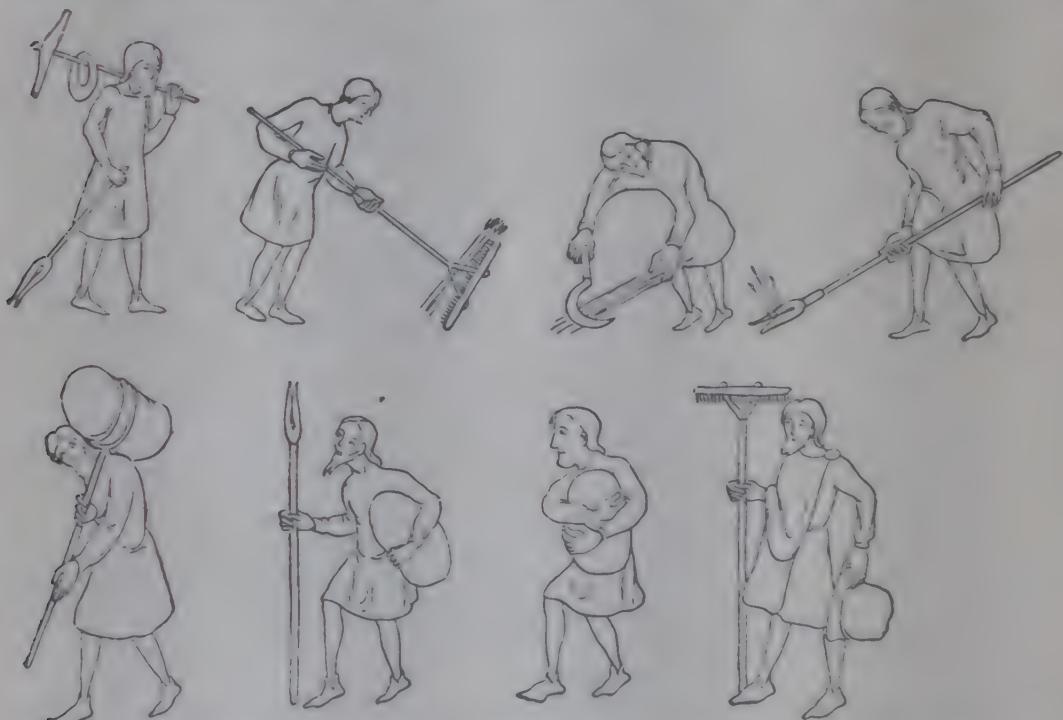


FIG. 33.—Old picture showing Saxon farmers at work, at the harvest.

they had been, for they began to give up acting as policemen, and keeping order in their courts, and did not go to war except in very dangerous times. They spent their days in working for the nobles, who had become their masters. They were no longer as free as they once had been.

When lords have such power as we have read of, over common people, they are called feudal lords, and the people are feudal dependants. It was only by giving up their freedom that Englishmen were able to find soldiers to defeat the Northmen, and have order in the country, and good justice in the courts.

CHAPTER X.—THE SECOND COMING OF THE NORTHMEN IN THE REIGN OF ETHELRED THE REDELESS *

IN 978 Edgar's son Ethelred became king. He is usually called Ethelred the Redeless, or "the badly advised." In his reign Northmen from Denmark and Norway began to sail against England once more. Olaf Tryggvason, the greatest fighter in the north of Europe, gathered a fleet together, and began to sail round the English coasts. The story of his life reads like a fairy tale. Before he was born his father, who was king of a small part of Southern Norway, called Viken, was slain by his enemies, and his mother had to fly for her life. Before Olaf was a year old his mother had carried him into Sweden. But her enemies followed her thither, and tried to capture her boy, so after two years she went on board ship to sail across the Baltic Sea to Russia, where her brother Sigurd was a tax-gatherer at the court of the king. Soon after the ship set sail pirates seized her, and sold Olaf to one man, and his mother to another. Six years later Sigurd, riding into a Russian village to collect the king's taxes, noticed a band of boys playing together. He called up the handsomest of them, and asked him his name. Quickly he discovered that he was talking to his own nephew. He bought him from his owner, and took

* See P. P. Hists. :—
Jun. Bk. II., Story of Edmund Ironside.
Jun. Bk. IV., Chap. XL.
Sen. Bk. I., Part II., Ethelred the Redeless.

him off to the court of the Russian king. Like the hero of a fairy tale the boy grew rapidly in strength and beauty, and at last married a princess, who made him captain of her soldiers, and used his help in the ruling of her kingdom. But in 984, three years after his marriage, his wife died, and after that he could endure life ashore no longer. He provided himself with a fleet of warships, and sailed away to become a pirate on the seas, and slay and plunder everywhere. Poets sang of his deeds ; they told how in England, Scotland, the Isle of Man, and Ireland wolves and ravens fed upon the piled-up corpses which he left behind.

In 991 he and two other roving chieftains brought a fleet of ninety-three vessels to plunder the east coast of England. They sailed up the river Panta in Essex to the little town of Maldon, and there on the northern bank they found Brihtnoth the East Saxon ealdorman waiting for them at the head of his fyrd. Brihtnoth was an old man, but he was true to his king, like the ealdormen of Alfred's day, and fought a great fight against the Northmen. Although in the end he was defeated, his courage and that of most of his men was so famous throughout the land, that an English poet of the time wrote a poem about them. Parts of that poem still exist, and give such a good account of the battle that some people think the poet must have seen the fighting. Englishmen in those days rode to battle, but fought on foot, and the poem, as we know it, opens with Brihtnoth's command to his men to let their horses go. They did as they were bade. One man had even brought his hawk with him to enjoy some sport while at war, but he let it fly away, and grasped his arms like his friends. Then the old ealdorman drew up his men in line. He rode up and down their front showing them how to stand,

and bidding them hold their spears firmly and fear nothing. Then when he was satisfied, he also dismounted, and stood among his most faithful companions.

Meanwhile the Vikings had landed on the southern bank, and there had drawn up their forces for a fight. But between the two armies ran the river, and as Maldon was near the sea, the tide had come up, and the water was deep. Then a Viking messenger came to the water's edge on his own side, and called aloud that the enemy would go away, if the Englishmen would pay gold.

“ Hail ! The swift sea rovers send me ;
 Bid me tell you—‘ Send them rings,
 Better send them to defend you
 From the rushing of our battle
 Than that we should deal you slaughter !
 If thou givest to the Vikings,
 At their dooming,* gold for friendship—
 We betake us to our shipping
 With the scats,† and o'er the waters
 Fare away in peace with you.’ ” ‡

Then Brihtnoth called back—

“ Hear, thou Seaman, what this folk say—
 ‘ Spearpoints they will give for tribute,
 Swords of old time, venomous edges,
 Battle gear that brings no gaining !
 Seaman’s herald, take the message
 Here stand I, an Earl and warding,
 With my host our fatherland.

“ ‘ Shameful would it seem to me
 Should ye fare to ship unfoughten,
 With our scats, when ye have hither
 Marched so far into our country.’ ”

So the two armies waited for the tide to fall. When the flood ebbed at last, Brihtnoth called to his men,

* Command.

† Payment.

‡ These extracts are quoted by permission from Mr. Stopford Brooke’s version of the poem.

bidding them guard the ford which ran through the stream. Thus he cried—

“ ‘ Wulfstan, kinsman, hard in war,
Hold the passage Son of Ceola.’
Then the first who strode the ford
Wulfstan smote him with his spear.”

When the Vikings saw how firmly the English resisted their passage, they asked permission to cross. Then the ealdorman, like a gentleman who loved to fight fairly, allowed many to reach his side of the river without resistance. He called to them—

“ ‘ Come !
Quickly come, for here is room
For the battle. God alone
Knoweth who the field shall win.’
Then the slaughter-wolves, the Vikings,
Reckless of the water, went
Over Panta ; bore their shields,
O'er the gleaming water bore,
All their linden shields to land.”

Then the battle began.

“ Then the shouting
Rose on high ; the ravens wheeled ;
Carrion-greedy, barked the eagle.
Then they let the sharp-set darts
Fly their fingers, and the spears
Edged to keenness. Busy now
Were the bows, and now the shield
Stopped the spear head ; bitter then
Charged the battle ; on each side
Fell the warriors, youths and men,
Dead upon the slaughter field.”

Brihnoth himself was wounded, but flung one spear through his enemy's throat, another through his shirt of mail, and laughed at his success. A second wound in the arm made him unable to wield his sword, but still

he heartened his men. Then he looked up to Heaven and spoke this word.

“Thanks I give Thee, King of peoples,
For the joys I found on earth.
I have need, O Lord of Mercy,
That Thou grant my ghost Thy kindness ;
That my soul to Thee may wend ;”

* * * * *

“Then the heathen hewed him down
And the men who stood by him,
Elfnoth and Wulmaer, lay dead ;
Life they yielded with their lord.”

Then cowards turned to flee, but brave men fought more fiercely to avenge their leader, or die by his side. In the end Olaf and his Northmen won, but it was a good fight, and no one was disgraced except the cowards. In order to win peace England had to pay 22,000 pounds of gold and silver.

In 994 Olaf found another friend to help him in Swein Forked Beard, son of Harold Bluetooth, king of Denmark. Olaf was a pirate, but he was an honourable pirate, and faithful to his friends. Swein was a scoundrel. He and his father had been baptised as Christians, but the son turned heathen again, and even gathered an army, and fought against his royal father to win from him a share of the kingdom of Denmark. Harold died of his wounds, and Swein became king. Olaf and he joined company, and in 994 appeared with ninety-four ships before the walls of London. But the citizens were hard fighting men, so that the enemy received much harm, and had to sail away down the estuary of the Thames. As they went they landed on the shores of Kent and Essex to take vengeance for their sufferings by burning, plundering, and slaughtering. They then

seized horses, and rode into Sussex and Hampshire. Then at last King Ethelred thought it time to do something. Unhappily he did not gather an army of all Wessex or of all England and fight. He paid the enemy 16,000 pounds in money, allowed them to take possession of Southampton, and ordered all his West Saxon subjects to send supplies of food there throughout the winter. Suddenly at this time Olaf turned Christian and promised King Ethelred that he would never plunder England again. He kept his word. He sailed away to Norway, overthrew the ruler of that country, and became king in his place. For five years (995-1000) he reigned there, and was very popular with his subjects who loved a good warrior. They were fond of telling tales of him after his death. When his warship, the *Serpent*, was being rowed by his companions, he would leap from the bulwarks on to the moving oars, and, treading lightly, run quickly from one to the other down the whole length of the ship. He could wield swords or throw spears with both hands at once. Being a Christian he endeavoured to convert his pagan subjects, but he used the most unchristian methods of war and torture to do so. In his land there were many magicians, who used all their powers against him. In a great sea-fight against Olaf, one, Raud by name, made himself a fair wind for his boat by magic, and escaped to his home on a distant arm of the sea, which Norwegians call a fiord. The entrance to the fiord was very narrow. When Olaf's fleet appeared in pursuit, a violent tempest was blowing through it out to sea, so that no ship could enter. Olaf believed this to be the work of the wizard, Raud, and of his friend the devil, and so called on his chaplain, Bishop Sigurd, to overcome it with God's help.

Then the bishop went forward in his priestly robes to

the bows of the king's ship, lit tapers and burned incense. The crucifix was set up, the Gospel read, and holy water sprinkled on the vessel. The order was then given for the ship to advance, and for all the fleet to follow. To the wonder of all, while wind roared down the narrow passage and billows rolled on every side, the air and water immediately round the royal ship were quite still. And so the whole fleet entered the fiord. Raud was made prisoner. Olaf called on him to accept Christianity or death. In return, Raud scoffed at God. A horrid story is told that Olaf thrust his hunting horn between Raud's teeth, and forced an adder into it, to gnaw out the man's inside. So Raud perished. All the men who were with him were either baptised, or, if they preferred paganism and witchcraft, were killed.

While Olaf was forcing his subjects to become Christian, Swein lived quietly in Denmark. But in 1000 A.D., the two friends quarrelled and Olaf was drowned in the Baltic in a great sea-fight. Other Northmen, however, raided England every year, as their predecessors had done in Alfred's time.

The history of England all through Ethelred's reign is very dreadful to read. Year after year the Northmen came and marched insolently through the country, burning towns and villages and slaughtering the people. One or two of Ethelred's ealdormen gathered armies together from the counties which they governed, and fought hard against the enemy, but they were always defeated, because Ethelred never came up to help with the fyrd of the whole kingdom.

He summoned, it is true, many great armies and fleets, and Englishmen at first answered his call willingly. But he rarely fought; he fled when the enemy came near, or made peace by paying Danegeld. When he

fought a battle, his ealdormen often deserted with their men, and he was defeated. His men were dismayed at his behaviour, and went home without attacking the enemy.

At last Ethelred ceased to call armies together, and the Northmen marched where they pleased. Men said one Northman was worth ten Englishmen. If two or three of the raiders appeared anywhere, the whole countryside fled from them in terror. The glares of burning houses were a common sight, in the midnight sky ; they came to be known as “war beacons.” Citizens, who had walls to protect them, cowered behind them, and watched marauding bands march past laden with booty. In Alfred’s time they would have dashed out against them.

It is pitiful to read the accounts, which a writer of the time gives in the Anglo Saxon Chronicle. He does not blame Englishmen, but their leaders. Here is one of his stories about a treacherous ealdorman, Aelfric. “When the ealdorman Aelfric should have led the army on, then he began to show his old tricks. When the armies were so near, that they could see each other, he called out that he was ill, and began to retch and spue.”

If you ask why England in Ethelred’s days was so weak, no one can give a good answer. Englishmen were as willing to fight their enemies as in Alfred’s days. Only when they found that Ethelred himself did nothing, and that his officers were traitors, did they give up in despair. Borough wares, thanes, fylds, and fleets were useless, when the king was unable to govern, and was betrayed by his ealdormen.

Ethelred in his folly, when he had plenty of good English soldiers begging to be led against their enemies, actually took some Northmen into his pay to fight

against other Northmen. Then some one told him that his new soldiers were conspiring together to destroy him, and in a great fear he ordered them and their friends to be slain on St. Brice's Day, November 11, 1002. The horrors of that day were long remembered. News of it reached Swein in Denmark. His own sister was among the victims. At a great feast he swore that before three winters had passed he would drive Ethelred from his kingdom or else kill him, and so seize his throne. Thus it happened that Swein of Denmark came against England a second time. In 1003 he landed at Exeter. For two years he and his men slaughtered and plundered at their will. In 1005 he went home, not to return to England till 1013.

But not for a moment did the ravaging of England cease. Odd bands of sea robbers roamed through the land, and the country was made miserable by the cowardice of its leaders and by murder and famine. In 1011 the Northmen besieged Canterbury, took it and ruined it. The Archbishop Alphege became their prisoner. Next year, at Easter-time, they ordered him to ransom himself. But he refused because his tenants were too poor to pay money. So his captors at Greenwich began in a drunken riot to pelt him with beef bones, and at last one slew him with an axe. This shameful murder was perhaps committed on the very spot in Greenwich where St. Alphege's Church now stands. Englishmen managed, however, to get possession of the body, and buried it in St. Paul's Cathedral in London.

Swein came to England for the third time in 1013, and there was no one able to resist him. A writer of the time has described his ships with their gaudy paint, their carved figure-heads, their weather vanes shaped like birds and dragons, and their shields hanging over

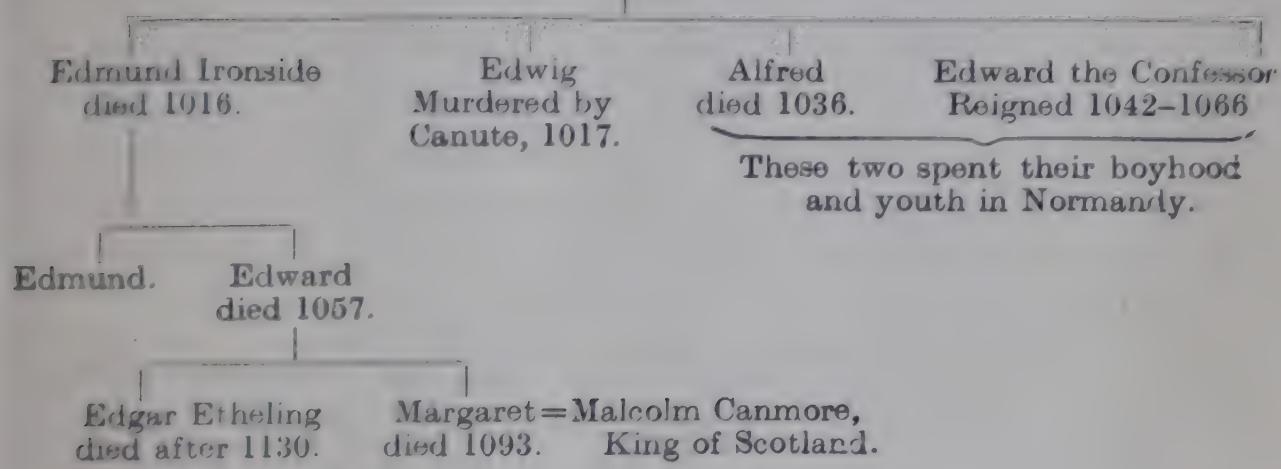
the sides. His fleet sailed up the Humber, and almost at once all that part of England, in which Northmen had settled in Alfred's time, yielded to him. He marched south across Watling Street, the old boundary between Guthrum and Alfred, and at once began to rob, kill, and burn. Everywhere the terrified English submitted to him except the citizens of London. But even they yielded when they heard that all the rest of England had taken Swein for king. Ethelred and his family fled oversea to Normandy.

But in 1014 Swein fell suddenly from his horse and died in torment. Ethelred came back to the throne. The struggle, however, was not over. In 1015 Swein's younger son Canute appeared off the coast of Kent with over two hundred ships as brightly painted and adorned as those which had formed his father's fleet. Treachery broke out in England; an ealdorman joined Canute's party. But at last Englishmen had found a leader in Ethelred's son Edmund, surnamed Ironside, for his gallant struggle against Canute. During the war which followed, Ethelred died. At once the spirit of England changed. Great armies joined Edmund as they had joined Alfred; they ceased to flee from the Northmen; they fought them on every opportunity. Six battles took place in seven months; the enemy began to flee as they had fled in Alfred's day, and nothing that they put their hands to prospered. But at Assandun in Essex, where Edmund fought his sixth battle, treachery broke out again. An English ealdorman, Eadric Streona, fled with all his soldiers when victory was almost in English hands. In consequence victory turned against the English, and in the slaughter that followed Edmund's army suffered so severely that he had to make peace with Canute. It was agreed that England should be divided between

them; Wessex, East Anglia, Essex, Kent, and London, and part of Mercia fell to Edmund, and the rest to Canute. Before the year 1016 was ended Edmund was dead after a reign of seven months, and Canute was king of all England.

ETHELRED'S DESCENDANTS.

ETHELRED THE REDELESS.



CHAPTER XI.—THE REIGN OF KING CANUTE

ENGLISHMEN always remember Canute with kindly feeling. Perhaps this is explained by the fact that in his reign of nineteen years there was perfect peace. No Northmen invaded the land, no battles were fought. The king loved his subjects as much as they loved him. If he had dispossessed many Englishmen of lands, and put Northmen in their places, or if he had expelled Englishmen from his councils, and chosen his ealdormen only from his own race, we should have regarded such behaviour as natural in a conqueror and in a man of violence. But he did none of these things. He left English landowners in peace, and chose English councillors and ealdormen. So quiet was his reign that we know very little about it. We can imagine quite well what was going on. Farms were being rebuilt ; smoke-blackened ruins were disappearing ; flocks and herds were increasing ; churches were rising ; land which had gone out of cultivation was being sown again with seed ; larger crops were being gathered, and hunger was ceasing.

Canute himself did his best to make Englishmen forget the time when his pagan father and himself had ravaged the land. He became a fervent Christian and especially reverenced English saints. By way of apology for the cruel murder of King Edmund of East Anglia by Northmen long ago in 870, he gave costly gifts to the abbey at Bury St. Edmunds. In 1023 he ordered the

body or the murdered St. Alphege to be transferred from St. Paul's Cathedral to the saint's own cathedral at Canterbury. He sent the queen and her son to take part in the stately funeral procession that slowly travelled along the old Roman road from Southwark over Shooters Hill. No one knew better than Canute how to win his subjects' hearts by respecting their religion.

Eadric Streona the traitor was called to London and put to death, so that he might not turn traitor again. But Canute made friends with other Englishmen, and promoted them to higher offices. Chief among them was Godwine, whom he made Earl of Wessex. It is clear that he feared no revolt against himself, or else he would have put no one but Danes into important positions, where they commanded armies and collected taxes.

But although Canute had become a Christian, he sometimes acted as cruelly as any pagan even to people who had done him no wrong. Edmund Ironside had a brother Edwig. Canute feared he might try to win the crown, and so he murdered him. But there were still two other boys of Ethelred the Redeless living in Normandy with their mother, Emma, the sister of the Norman Duke. Canute thought that the best way to prevent the Duke from helping them to win the English throne would be to marry their mother. Emma must have been a curious woman, for she actually accepted Canute's proposal. Her boys were not likely to fight against the man who had married their mother.

In 1019 Canute became king of Denmark, after his brother Harold's death, and in 1028 he invaded Norway, drove out its king, and seized its crown. So England became part of a great northern empire.

In those days when men had behaved cruelly and wished to obtain forgiveness from God, they went on

pilgrimage to Jerusalem or to Rome, where the Pope lived, and where St. Paul and St. Peter were buried. Sometimes they went to other cities. Therefore, when Canute had ruled for eleven years in England, he went on pilgrimage to Rome, for he remembered his sins. On his way thither he travelled through the lands of many different rulers, including those of the Emperor, who was the greatest of all rulers in Western Europe. As he journeyed he remembered his people. He wrote a Latin letter to them from Rome, telling what he had done for them. It is a nice letter, and shows what kind of a man he was. Here is a part of what he wrote—

“ This is to let you know that I have lately made a journey to Rome to pray for the forgiveness of my sins, and for the good of my dominions and of my people. I return thanks to God Almighty, because he has allowed me to visit the tombs of the Apostles Saint Peter and Saint Paul, and to worship at them. I spoke with the Emperor at Rome and the Pope about the needs of my people, both English and Danes. I asked that they should have just dealings and better safety when they come to Rome, and that they should not be hindered on the way, nor be troubled by heavy payments. The Emperor consented to my wishes, as did other princes, through whose lands my subjects travel in their journeys to Rome. I complained to the Pope that my archbishops were troubled by demands for great sums of money when they visited Rome, according to their custom. It was ordered that these demands should cease. I have returned thanks to God Almighty, because I have successfully performed all my wishes.

“ Be it known to all of you that I have humbly vowed to God to improve my manner of life, and to rule my kingdoms and people with justice and mercy. I order

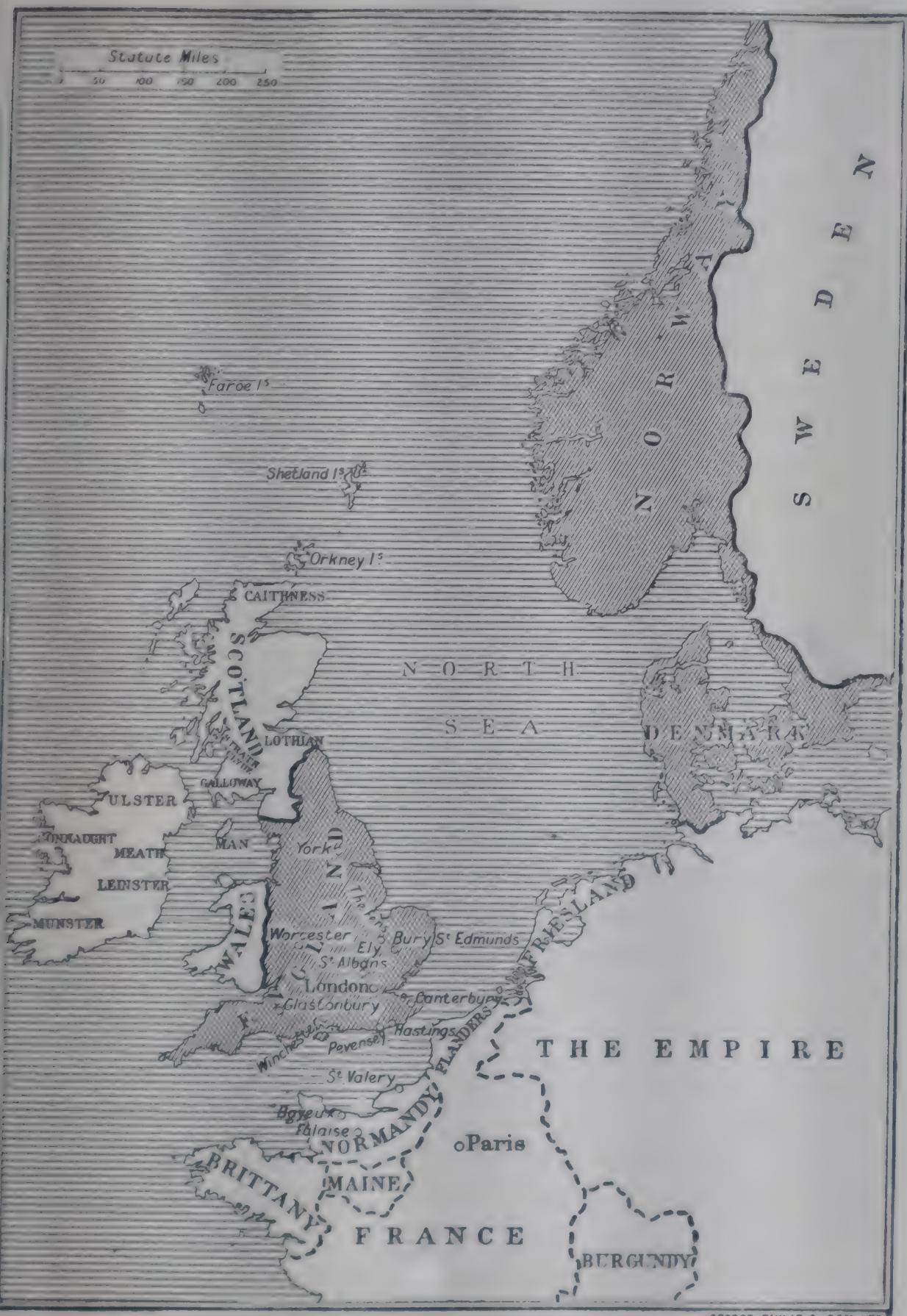


FIG. 34.—The Kingdoms of Canute.

all my councillors, whom I have set over my people, not to commit any injustice, either from fear of me, or from favour to any powerful person. I also order all my sheriffs and magistrates to use no unjust violence to any man, rich or poor, but do fair justice to all. They are not to gather wealth for me wrongfully ; I have no need to increase my riches by unjust demands.

“ I propose to return to England early in the summer. I have sent this letter before me that my people may be gladdened at my success. I have not spared myself or my exertions in the necessary service of my subjects. Now, therefore, I command my bishops and governors that all payments belonging to God be paid, namely, tithe of animals, tithes of corn, and the first fruits of grain, which we call church payment. Farewell.”

This is a pleasant letter. Probably it was read out to the people in all the moots and courts of England, and some friendly priest or bishop translated it aloud into English so that all might understand it. Apparently the Emperor and the Pope thought as well of King Canute as his English subjects did. In 1035 Canute died. He has left a memory of good deeds behind—not so fair a memory as Alfred’s, but a very good one for a man who was at first a pagan, and slew many people with great cruelty.

CHAPTER XII.—HOW WILLIAM DUKE OF NORMANDY CONQUERED ENGLAND *

A HUNDRED years before Canute's time, when the Northmen in Alfred's reign were attacking England, other men of the same kind were plundering the North of France. After plundering for a while, they, just like the Northmen in England, thought they would like to settle down in the country they were destroying. At last, in 911, Rolf, their leader, compelled the French King Charles to give him a great part of French territory just south of the English Channel. Rolf and his men were Northmen, or Normans, and so their new French territory received the name Normandy, by which it is still known. It was the French Danelaw. The new settlers were rough men and fond of rough jokes. There is a story told that when King Charles ordered Rolf to do him homage, Rolf signed to one of his men to take his place, and bend low before the king and kiss his feet. The man who received the order, instead of bending his head to the king's foot, seized and lifted the foot to his lips, so that King Charles was toppled backwards from his throne.

Rolf received the title of Duke, and divided Normandy among his followers. The former landowners became

* See P. P. Hists. :—

Jun. Bk. III., Hereward the Wake.

Jun. Bk. IV., Chap. XII.

Sen. Bk. I., Part III., Story of the Conquest.

peasants working for pirate masters. They were treated so cruelly that on one occasion they rose in rebellion. In time, however, the Normans became more civilised. They learned to speak the French language, and forgot their own. They gave up paganism, and became Christians. Churches and monasteries were built by them. At first the Norman monks behaved very much as pirates do ; they loved the sword rather than the pen. We read of some who fought together, and struck one another on the mouth with fists. This was very unlike the proper behaviour for monks. But they learned to behave better. Whatever Normans put their hands to, they did with all their might ; so soon the most devout monks, and the best scholars, were to be found in Normandy. Many Normans became famous architects. There was plenty of work for them to do.

Every Norman landowner thought people would despise him unless he built churches and monasteries on his estates, and gave lands to priests and monks. And when he made any improvements or repairs in his own house, he always thought it right to do something to the church at the same time.

But Normans loved fighting above everything else. They gave up going to sea as pirates, and did their fighting on land. They learned the new style. Hitherto Northmen and Englishmen had always fought on foot. For though English thanes had ridden to battle they had always dismounted to fight. But Normans learned in France how to fight with sword and lance on horseback, and soon became the finest soldiers of their time.

In the time of Ethelred the Redeless, Richard, a descendant of Rolf, was Duke of Normandy. Emma, his sister, became Ethelred's queen. In 1017, she married Canute, and became queen of England a second time. But

her two boys, Alfred and Edward, stayed in Normandy, where they learned to speak French well and to be very devout Christians. Canute died in 1035. His two bad sons, Harold and Harthacanute, reigned after him, but happily for England they soon died also. Then Edward, son of Emma and Ethelred, was sent for from Normandy and made king in 1042. He is always spoken of as Edward the Confessor.

Edward loved Normans more than he loved Englishmen, and hoped that at his death his kinsman, William the Duke of Normandy, would become King of England.

William was born in 1027. He was descended from Rolf the first duke, and was grandson of Duke Richard, who had been Queen Emma's brother. His father's name was Robert. When William was only seven years old his father decided to go on pilgrimage to Jerusalem to beg forgiveness for his sins at Christ's sepulchre. Going on pilgrimage brought people into danger from thirst, famine, robbers, and disease. So Robert, in fear that he might never return, called his nobles together, and begged them to accept little William as his successor. He presented the boy to them. "He is little at present," he said, "but he will grow up." The nobles consented, and Robert went away. In 1035 news came that he had died in Asia Minor on his way home.

Then began a dreadful time for little William. The nobles began to build castles everywhere, and to rebel against their ruler. William's best friend, Osbern, was slain in the boy's own bedroom. Another friend was poisoned. Only by hurrying from castle to castle could he keep out of the hands of his enemies. Even in 1047, when he was twenty years old, his jester burst into his bedroom, and begged him to fly for his life, for his foes were bent on killing him. He mounted his horse, and

rode alone all night across the country and through rivers, until in the morning he passed the castle of a faithful man called Hubert of Rye. Hubert recognised his young master, and stopped him to ask the reason of his early ride. When he heard of the duke's plight, he gave him a fresh horse, and sent his three sons with him, bidding them not to leave him till he was safe in his own castle of Falaise. But William by many battles conquered his enemies and destroyed their castles, and at length Normandy was at peace.

William began to have time to think about other things. No doubt he knew that Edward of England wished him to succeed to the English throne, and when in 1051 there came an invitation to visit England, William was certainly pleased to go. When he arrived he spent some weeks with Edward, and in that time the English king promised to leave him the throne when he died. But the Norman duke could see that there were many men in England, who disliked the prospect of having a Norman king, and that when Edward died it would certainly be necessary for his heir to fight against them for his throne. Chief among these patriotic Englishmen were Godwine, Earl of Wessex, and Earl Harold, his son. Edward, however, continued to reign in England for fifteen years longer, and so William had all that time in which to make his plans.

At last, in 1066, Edward died, and was buried in the Abbey of Westminster, which he had built. Harold, Earl Godwine's son, was chosen king in his stead. The news reached William as he was on the point of going out to hunt. He was just giving his bow to a page to carry, when a messenger rode up, and told him secretly that Harold had been made king. The duke thought no more of hunting that day; he went home

to his castle, lay down on a bench in his great hall, and leaned his head against a pillar to think what he was to do. At that moment Fitz Osbern, the son of his early friend Osbern, came in, and saw him sitting in silence, while his followers looked on from their end of the hall. He bade his master fight for the English crown, and there and then William made up his mind.

Then began great preparations. William persuaded



FIG. 35.

Here we see Harold being offered the crown. On the right we see him seated on the throne and wearing the crown. His Archbishop Stigand stands on his left hand. Copied from the Bayeux Tapestry. The Latin words mean "They gave Harold the King's crown," and "Here sits Harold, King of the English," and "Stigand Archbishop."

his nobles to help him. Fitz Osbern promised to supply some ships. Another noble, Roger of Montgomery, promised sixty, others promised fifty, forty, thirty, or fewer. But there were not sufficient men in Normandy for the great work of conquering England, so William called for volunteers from all France. He proclaimed abroad that England was rich in gold and silver, well supplied with fruit and drink, and "stuffed" with many good things beside. Men who loved fighting came to him from all parts of France.

Then the Norman forests were entered by woodcutters, who felled timber for shipbuilding. A great fleet was made to carry an army of men and horses. William's own ship was called the *Mora*. His wife Matilda had it built specially for him. It had on it a figure of a boy, made out of gold ; the left hand grasped a pennon pointing to England ; with the right the figure held an ivory trumpet to its mouth. You can see the ship in the Bayeux Tapestry. You can see many other things besides, such as the woodmen felling trees, shipwrights building ships, and soldiers carrying armour on board. The tapestry is called the Bayeux Tapestry, for it was made to hang round the walls of the cathedral in the Norman town of Bayeux. It is still preserved in that town.

But William's mind was uneasy. He felt that he was doing an unrighteous thing in attacking England. All the world knew that Englishmen had a right to choose Harold as their king. And when William said that Edward had promised him the throne every one knew Edward had no right to do so. So the Norman duke had to discover some way of persuading the princes of Europe that he was acting rightly in attacking England. It was very necessary to persuade the Pope, for every one at that time was beginning to believe that the Pope had power to decide who was in the right when rulers quarrelled.

So William pointed out to every one that the clergy and monks in England were not doing their duty. And the Pope agreed with him. Although Edward had been a pious king and had built Westminster Abbey, he had not governed his clergy well. It was the business of bishops, priests, abbots, and monks to lead good lives themselves in order that others might learn to do the same. But they were not doing so in England.

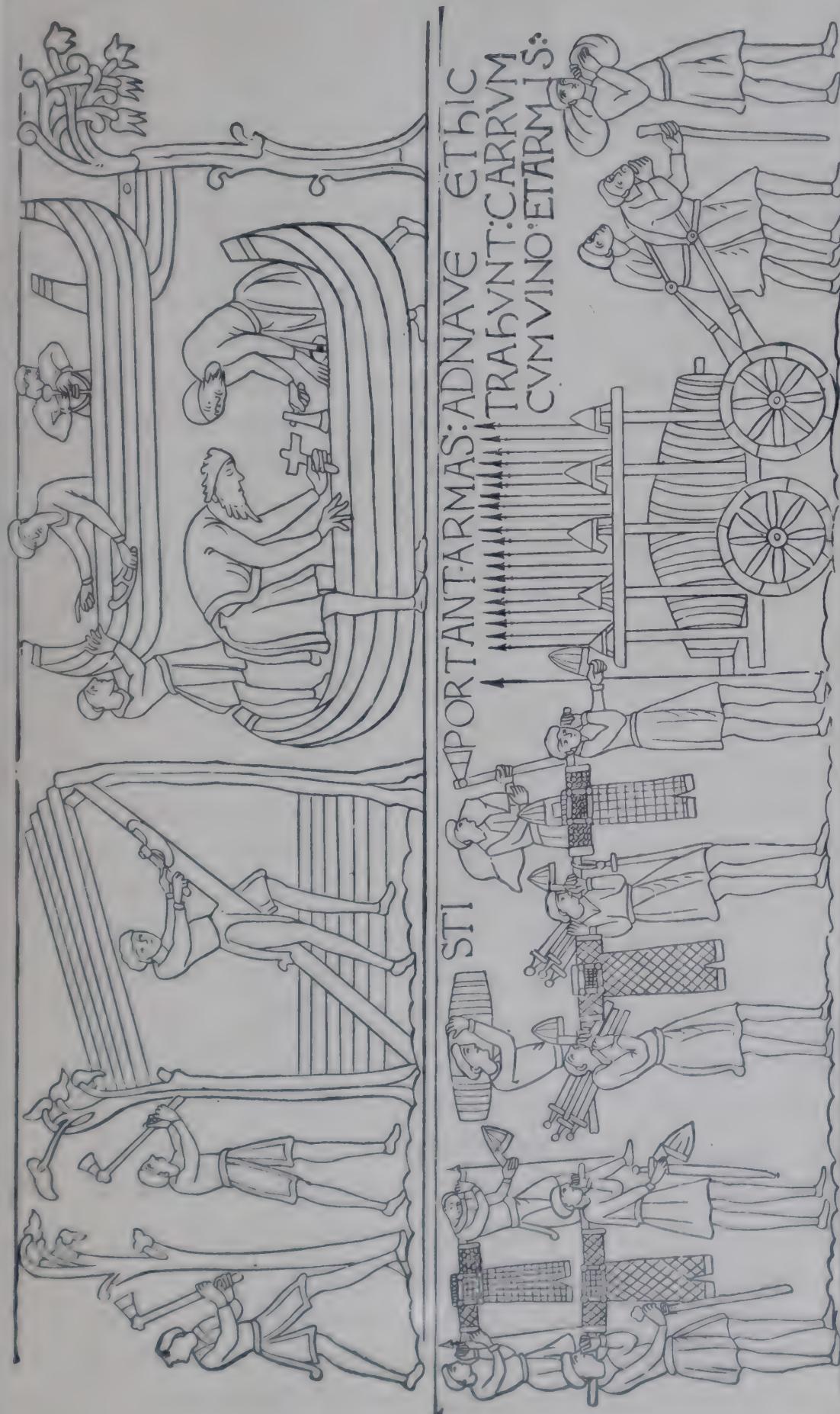


FIG. 36.

Pictures from the Bayeux Tapestry showing Norman workmen felling trees, building ships, and loading them with coats of mail, swords, helmers, spears, casks of wine, and sacks of meal. The Latin words mean "They carry arms to the ships, and here they drag a cart with wine and weapons."

Many bishops thought more about collecting their tithes and rents than about looking after their priests. One was such a cruel searcher after money that he was called the Hawk. Some of them had given money to nobles and others in order to be appointed as bishops, and thus acquire the revenues of the great estates, which men had given to the Church to help it in its work. Some bishops, in order that they might be wealthy, held two bishoprics at once. The Archbishop of York was usually Bishop of Worcester as well; and the Archbishop of Canterbury was also Bishop of Winchester and abbot of the monasteries of Ely, Glastonbury, and St. Albans. Look at a map and see how far Worcester is from York, and Winchester from Canterbury. The bishops could not visit all their priests regularly, and confirm the boys and girls of each parish every year. Neither could the Archbishop of Canterbury look after the monks of three great abbeys. When at last the Archbishop of York was compelled to give up the bishopric of Worcester to a pious man called Wulfstan, he actually tried to steal a great deal of the new bishop's lands. Even this pious Wulfstan was ignorant of Latin, and so could not read the Latin books, which every clergyman of the time should have studied. He did not look after the clergymen who lived in his own palace, but allowed them to fall into drunken ways; and although he fasted three days a week in Lent, he did not prevent his followers from eating most glutonously. It is clear that Edward was not able to choose good bishops. Probably there were few Englishmen fit to be bishops.

The monks also did not live in the right way. They did not stay in the monasteries as they should have done; instead of spending day and night in prayer and praise, many of them spent their days in hunting or in visiting

their friends, and merely returned to the monasteries to sleep. So the services were badly performed. Few monks spent any time in study. The food they ate was not simple as it should have been. And the parish priests were ignorant men. Many of them were drunkards. Most of them were married. The Pope and many of the best men on the continent were beginning to think, as Roman Catholics do to-day, that married men did not make the best priests. Certainly Englishmen were not kept in good order by their priests. They often refused to pay tithes ; so priests had to get money in other ways. Instead of attending church on Sundays and Saints' Days, men went hunting. And it was difficult to have punishment inflicted, as Archbishop Theodore had ordered, on men who sinned against Church laws ; for these men had to be tried in the ordinary courts, where their friends acted as judges. So the men who feasted when they should have fasted, or refused to pay tithe, or did not go to church, or did not bring their children to be baptised, or did not go to Holy Communion, were not punished as the rules of the Church ordered.

The Pope wished to see all this changed. He thought that he was responsible to God for the ignorance and wickedness of English bishops, monks, and priests. When Edward was king, the Pope had tried to improve matters, but without success. So he heard with pleasure that William intended to conquer England, for William was a devout man. He frequently went to Communion, listened eagerly to the reading of the Scriptures, brought up his children carefully in religious knowledge, and built churches and monasteries in his Duchy of Normandy. His wife Matilda also built monasteries. His priests were not married. His bishops did not hold several

bishoprics at once. They kept good schools for priests. He was very fond of good and learned men. Monasteries in his lands were orderly places where monks were holy and well educated. His best friend was a famous and good monk called Lanfranc, who was the greatest teacher of his time. So when the Pope was told that William was invading England "not so much to increase his

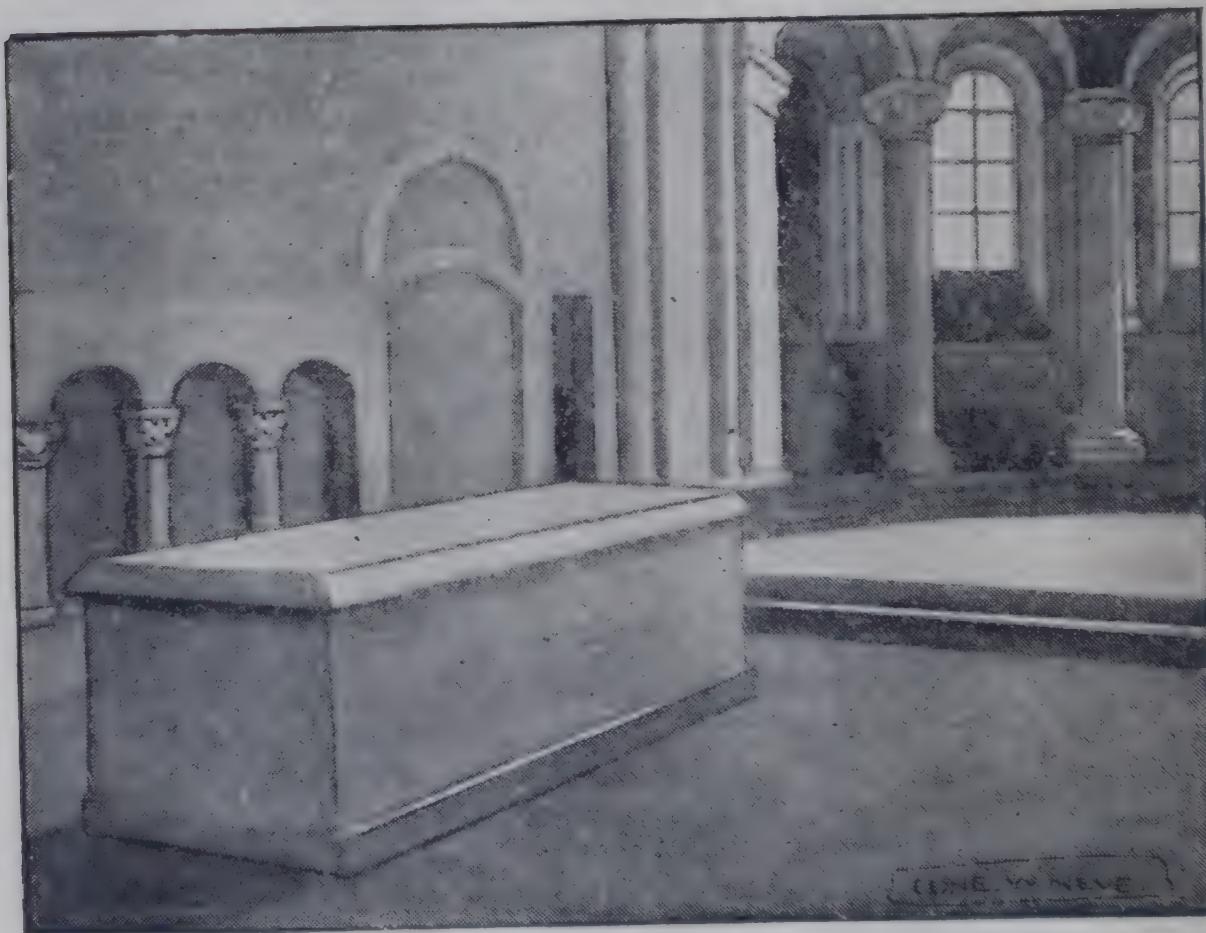


FIG. 37.—Queen Matilda's Tomb.
In the nunnery which she built at Caen.

dominions and glory as to reform Christian religion in that country," he willingly believed him. He sent a consecrated banner to the duke, and wished him success.

So William in good spirits gathered his ships together on the coast of Normandy, and waited for a fair wind from the south to blow them over to England. He waited for a long time in vain. At last he moved his fleet to the mouth of the river Somme. Still he had

to wait for fifteen days more. Day after day he went to a neighbouring church, dedicated to St. Valery, and prayed for a south wind. Many times a day he cast his eyes to the weather-cock on the church tower, and wept when it pointed anywhere except to the south. At last, on September 27, a fair wind blew, and William sailed with 694 ships, about 10,000 footmen, and 3000 horsemen.

In this year, 1066, 'a comet, or "hairy star,"' was rushing through the heavens, and all men in England wondered what evils it foretold. All through July and

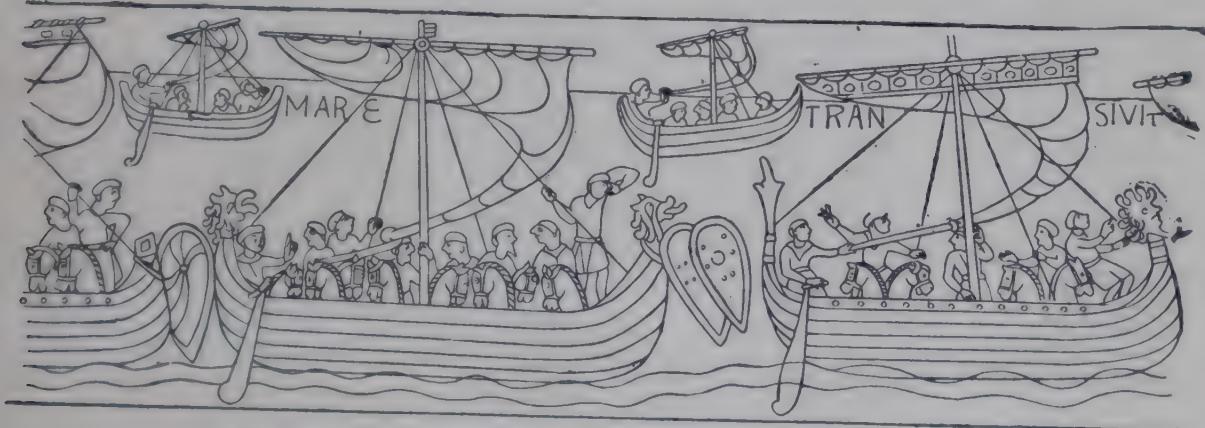


FIG. 38.—William's Ships sailing to Pevensey.

August King Harold, with his fyrd and fleet, lay on the south coast of England, waiting to do battle against Duke William. But week after week passed, and never a sail was seen, for first of all William had to gather many men, and make many ships, and then the wind kept him back. At last Harold's seamen had eaten up all their food, and had to be sent to London. Then suddenly bad news came from the north, whence Harold never expected it. Another King Harold, called Harold Hardrada of Norway, had decided, like King Canute before him, to be king of England, and had landed an army from 300 ships in Northumbria. And with him was Tostig, a traitor brother of the English king. On

hearing of his landing, Harold marched hot-foot for the north and reached York on September 25. To Tostig his brother he offered a share in the kingdom of England. When Tostig asked what King Harold of Norway was to have, the English king promised him "seven feet of English ground," that is, just enough ground for his grave. No peace could be made. The armies fought on the very day on which Harold of England reached Stamford Bridge. The invaders were beaten with great slaughter. Tostig and his friend were slain and laid in English graves, and out of all their



FIG. 39.

Men with spades making an earthen mound at Hastings on which to set up a wooden tower. The Latin words mean "He ordered that a castle should be dug at Hastings."

gallant army the English only left alive enough men to man twenty-four ships. This was the last of many fierce battles between Englishmen and Northmen. So famous a victory was it that we wish some Englishman had written a poem about it like those about Brunanburh and Maldon.

About a week after the fight, word reached Harold that Duke William was in England at last. He had landed at Pevensey on September 28, to find Harold far away in the north and the English coast unprotected. The English king marched to London at tremendous speed to fight once more for his crown, and met the Normans on the hills, eight miles north-west of Hastings. Here also was a great fight, but Harold was slain by

an arrow wound in the eye, and although his own thanes resisted to the end, the rest of the fyrd streamed out in flight away to the north through the dense forest of the Weald. Duke William marched slowly by a round-about way to London, burning and ravaging the country terribly as he went. Many years later men were still working to repair the damage he did. He so frightened Englishmen that in despair they accepted him for king, and on Christmas Day he was crowned in the new Abbey Church of Westminster, which Edward had built. On the site of the battle of Hastings he built a great monastery



FIG. 40.—The Battle of Hastings. King Harold is shown pulling an arrow from his eye. The Latin means "Harold the King is slain."

called Battle Abbey. The altar of the abbey church was placed on the very spot where Harold fell. If you go to see the place, you will find many of the buildings of the abbey still standing. But it is a private house now; the monks were driven out long ago.

For five years after the battle William had to fight against Englishmen, who rose in rebellion. But they never joined into one big army; so William defeated them a few at a time. The men of Northumbria gave him most trouble. They were always killing his men. So in 1069 he inflicted cruel punishment on them by

ravaging all Yorkshire. He burnt every house and killed every living thing, human and animal, that he could catch. For many, many years afterwards Yorkshire was a waste. Only a few miserable beings lived among the hills.

The last Englishman who held out against the Normans was Hereward the Wake. He acted very like King Alfred in 878. He chose an island among marshes, and prepared to defend it. Perhaps he thought that in time Englishmen would recover their courage, and gather round him as they had done round Alfred. He selected the Isle of Ely. It is not an island now, for the marshes have been drained and produce fertile crops of corn. But in Hereward's time it could only be reached by boat. It was eight miles long and six broad. A French knight of William's time has told us what it looked like. "The island," he says, "is richly supplied; it has many kinds of grass, and in goodness of soil surpasses all England. Its charming fields and pastures make it most pleasant. It is remarkable for its beasts of the chase, and is very rich in flocks and herds. In the eddies at the watergates innumerable eels are caught with nets, also large pike, pickerels, perch, roach, burbots, and lampreys, which we call water-snakes. Many people say that salmon are sometimes caught there, and also the royal fish, the sturgeon. There one can find geese, teal, coots, didappers, water crows, herons, and ducks, more than man can number in winter or at moulting time. I have seen a hundred, or even three hundred, caught at once, sometimes with bird lime, sometimes in nets or snares."

In 1071 William led his men to the island and began to make a wooden causeway, or road, through the water. The peasants of the fens were glad to carry bundles of

HOW WILLIAM CONQUERED ENGLAND 123

wood to make the road, for Hereward's men made raids into the country round about, and stole food. To encourage his men William set up a witch on a tower to yell curses at Hereward and his friends ; Hereward set fire to the reeds and burned the causeway, tower, witch and all. But William went on fighting. At last the monks, who lived in a monastery on the island, began to fear that when the Normans entered, they would take a dreadful revenge. So they showed William's men how to enter the island, and Hereward and his men had to flee. The causeway, which William made, continued for centuries to be the road from Cambridge to the Isle. To-day it can still be seen ; but it is only a field track now.

NORMAN DUKES AND KINGS.

ROLF, 911-927.

William Longsword, 927-943.

Richard the Fearless, 943-996.

Richard the Good,
996-1027.

Robert, 1027-1035.

Emma, married Ethelred
the Redeless and Canute.

William the Conqueror of England,

William Rufus,
1087-1100.

Henry Beauclerk, 1100-1135.

Adela

Matilda, married Geoffrey
of Anjou.

Stephen of Blois,
1135-1154.

William. Lost in the
White Ship in 1120.

Henry Plantagenet,
1154-1189.

Richard I., 1189-1199.

John. 1199-1216.

CHAPTER XIII.—HOW WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR GOVERNED ENGLAND *

THE Norman Conquest had some terrible results for the English. To punish English nobles for fighting against him at Hastings and elsewhere, William took away almost all their lands. In the records of the end of his reign great English nobles are scarcely mentioned ; that shows that there were very few then left. Their lands, with freemen and villeins on them, were given to Normans. William made Eudes, son of his old friend Hubert of Rye, into his butler, and gave him large estates. To be a king's butler was a very great honour in those days. Roger of Montgomery, who had sailed with sixty ships to Pevensey, received the estate of Arundel in Sussex, and became Earl of Shropshire. The county of Montgomery is called after him because he helped to conquer it from the Welsh. Fitz Osbern, who had helped William to make his mind up in 1066, became Earl of Hereford. These men, and many others, who were rewarded like them, rode into many of the villages and towns of England and took possession. Many of the English thanes disappeared ; some of them were killed ; the remainder were driven out of their houses and lands, and became peasants, toiling for the Normans on the lands which once they had owned. The free Englishmen became peasants also. Men who in the old time had laboured

* See P. P. Hists., Jun. Bk. IV., Chaps. XII. and XIV.

only a few days in the year on the land of their lord, now had to labour for many, and do other services such as carting, building, and thatching in addition. Wild with misery and regret, they rose against their new masters and slew them. In the fighting that occurred houses were burnt, and men were slain. So in very many parts of England there were fewer men to pay dues of corn,



FIG. 41.—What a Norman Motte and Ditch look like to-day.

hay, cattle, and other things to landowners. But the Norman lords, to whom William gave the land, ruthlessly set to work to make the survivors work the harder. They compelled them to plough more land for them and their followers, and pay them increased supplies of meat, beer, corn, fish, honey, cheese, and other things. Whatever orders they gave had to be obeyed. Norman and Englishman naturally hated one another with a bitter hatred.

It was necessary for the lord to build himself a castle, in which he and his family might live in safety. The English thane had had nothing to fear from his English dependants. He had lived in their midst in a wooden hall, surrounded by a simple fence. But the Norman was in an enemy's country, and had to fortify himself against attack. First of all he compelled his English peasantry to raise a lofty mound of earth, called a motte. Roger of

Montgomery caused to be made at Arundel a mound seventy feet high, which can still be seen. Round the foot of the mounds a deep trench was dug to hold water; and on the outside edge of the trench was raised a circular earthen rampart with a strong wooden stockade upon it. Upon the top of the great mound,

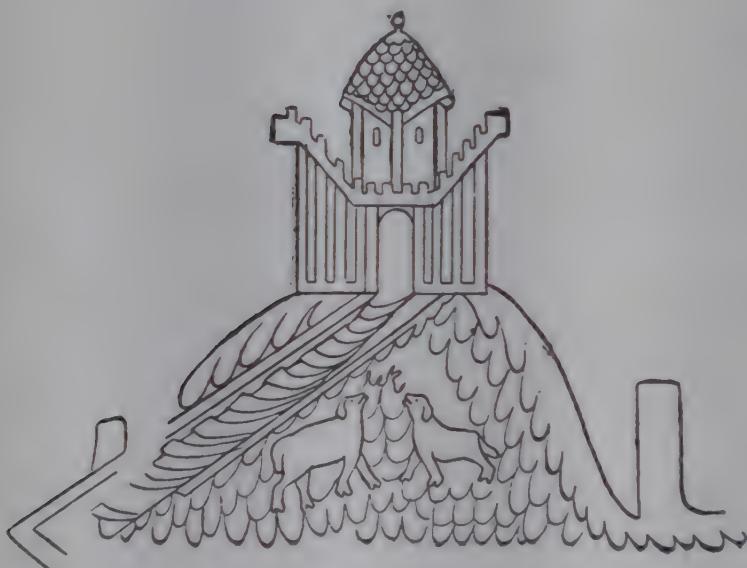


FIG. 42.

Picture of a Castle at Rennes. It shows the mound or motte, the ditch and rampart at its foot, the tower surrounded by its wooden stockade on the summit, and the wooden bridge leading downwards. Some animals are shown grazing on the motte. Taken from the Bayeux Tapestry.

or motte, a wooden tower of several floors was built. The ground floor was used for granaries and store-rooms. On the first floor were the great hall, kitchen, pantry, and a bedroom or two, where the lord and his wife slept. On the second floor there were more bedrooms for the lord's sons and daughters, and for the soldiers, whose duty it was to keep perpetual watch from the highest platform of the tower. Outside the tower round the very edge of the summit of the motte was another wooden stockade. In this stockade was a doorway, and from the threshold

of it a wooden bridge stretched over the ditch to the ground outside. This bridge was supported on wooden trestles, and was strong enough to carry fully-armed warriors on horseback. A glance at the picture, which the Bayeux Tapestry gives of the castle of Rennes, makes clear the general idea of a Norman motte and tower. Usually a motte had a kind of yard, called a bailey, at its foot beyond the ditch. This also was surrounded with a stockaded rampart of earth and a ditch. Into the bailey were driven the lord's sheep and cattle, whenever trouble arose among his peasants. There was grass sufficient to serve as food, till things were quiet again.

Seventy-one of these mottes have been counted in England. There are probably many more. In four places only were stone towers built in the time of William I. The building known as the White Tower in London is one of these. The wooden towers, which crowned the earthen mottes, have long ago completely disappeared. The kings destroyed some, and others decayed, and on some mottes stone towers were built later on. The stone tower on the motte at Arundel still stands. But in most cases the motte alone remains to remind Englishmen of a time when foreigners conquered them,

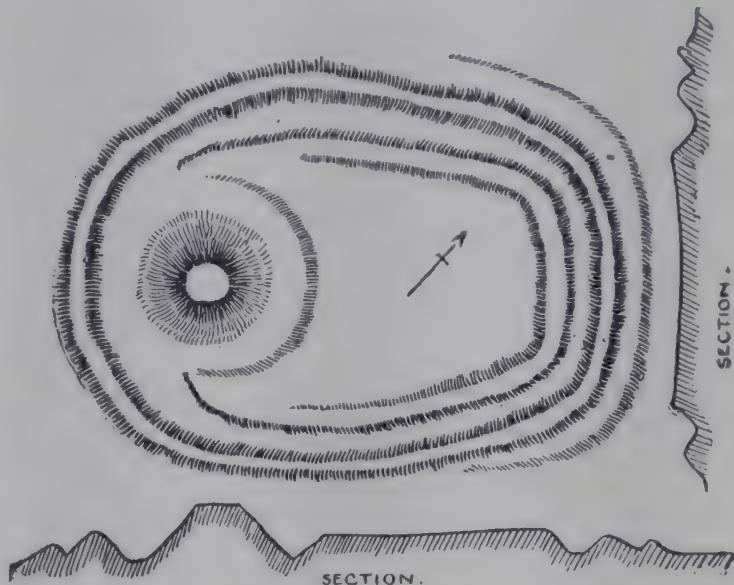


FIG. 43.—Ground plan and section of a Norman castle, showing the earthen mound or motte on which the castle stood, the bailey or yard, and the ditches and ramparts which surrounded them.

and bitterly oppressed them. The cruelty of the lord is often proved by the statement in old writings, that in order to find room for his motte and bailey he destroyed 51, or 166, or 113, or some other number of houses. The English had first to labour with axes



FIG. 44.—The Tower of London.

As built by William the Conqueror, now known as the White Tower. At the present day the windows and tops to the turrets have been altered.

to demolish their own houses, and then had to work with spade and axe to erect a stronghold for their master. Many an English heart must have broken with grief.

William did not give lands away for nothing. He needed soldiers to fight against rebel Englishmen; so when he gave lands to a noble he bargained that the noble should bring him a certain number of soldiers

on horseback when he called for them. This noble was called a baron, or a tenant-in-chief, because he held his lands from King William. And he was called a military tenant, because he owed service in war. His mounted soldiers are usually called knights.

From some of his tenants-in-chief the king asked for five knights, from others ten, twenty, thirty, or even a hundred. The tenants, in order to be sure of having knights ready for the king, usually marked off parts of their great estates into smaller ones ; they gave these to suitable men, who undertook to go, whenever William should call for the soldiers whom his tenant had promised. These little estates were called "knight's fees" or "fiefs." It is calculated that there were 5000 or 6000 of them in England.

William expected his tenants-in-chief or barons to come and give him advice, when he called for them. The meeting in which they sat was called "The Great Council." When William made a law he said that he did so with the consent of the members of this council.

But kings need money as well as advice and soldiers. His tenants-in-chief allowed William to tax them ; he had the right to ask his tenants for a sum of money called an "aid," when he needed it. Of course he was careful not to ask too often. Whenever a tenant-in-chief died leaving a son to succeed him, the son had to pay William a sum of money called a "relief," before he could take possession of his father's lands. If the tenant's son were under full age, the king had the right to take possession of the lands till the boy was grown up. In such a case the king sent an agent to manage the boy's estate, and often ordered him to make as much money for the royal treasury as possible. So the agent sold the boy's corn, timber, fish, cattle, and many other things. If

a villein offered to pay a sum of money, in order to be excused for ever afterwards from toiling on the boy's lands and looking after his cattle, the agent willingly agreed. And little or no trouble was taken to keep ploughs, barns, carts, mills, and other things in proper repair. Very often, when the boy was old enough to take possession of his estate, he found his finest trees had been felled, his fish-ponds emptied, his mills, barns, carts, and houses in a ruinous condition, his roofs decayed, his horses gone, and very few villeins working on his lands.

If a tenant-in-chief died leaving no sons, but only daughters, the king could refuse to allow the heiresses to get married, unless the men who wanted to marry them paid large sums of money.

But in addition to giving William advice, money and soldiers, the tenants-in-chief or barons helped to keep the country in order by setting up courts of justice in their castles. They liked to do this because they received the fines for themselves. In his court a baron tried men who fought or stole on his estate, or committed murder, or owed money. Sometimes the very important barons condemned criminals to death, and seized all their property. All the men who lived on the baron's estate were compelled to attend the court, watch the ordeal, and act as judges in the old English way. Any one who stayed away was fined. So the court made much money for the baron.

Barons were powerful men. William feared them. They had plenty of money and soldiers and strong castles. Sometimes they used these to rebel against the king. William remembered the days in Normandy when he rode for his life. So he determined not to make England like Normandy, but to keep some of the old English

ways of governing. He knew that every shire in old English times had had its own army or fyrd, in which every Englishman was supposed to appear, and which the ealdorman led. He knew that each shire had had its own court of justice, where the ealdorman had sat as president, and where the men of the shire had come to do their duty as judges. He knew that the English kings had often taken a tax called Danegeld from the people of the shires to keep away the Danes. He determined to keep the fyrd and the shire court and the Danegeld.

But he did not wish a great nobleman like the ealdorman to manage all these things. So he appointed a royal officer called a sheriff. He ordered this man to see that the old English fyrd was always ready. When Norman barons rebelled against the king, the sheriff called out the fyrd, and besieged their castles. This happened very often. Englishmen willingly went to the fyrd on these occasions, for they hated the barons bitterly.

The sheriff also collected Danegeld. William levied Danegeld even when there were no Danish invasions. In order that he might know how much money he could get in this way he sent officers round the counties of his kingdom in 1086. They were ordered to call the county courts together, and then to ask questions about each estate in the county. Special men, who knew a good deal about their districts, were chosen to answer the questions, and they were compelled to swear that they would answer truly. So when the court met, and the sheriff had called for quietness, and the clerks, who were to make notes on parchment, were ready, the questions were asked. One was, "Who owned this estate in King Edward's time?" Then the specially appointed

men would answer that they remembered, or had heard, that Ulf, or Aelfric, or Edgar, or some other Englishman held it. Perhaps the old owner would be in the court, dressed like a poor peasant, or perhaps his son would be there, and all Englishmen would look pityingly at him. Then came the next question, "Who holds this estate now?" Some Norman name would be mentioned. Possibly this new owner would be in court also, and the English would scowl at him. Perhaps fighting would break out when Englishmen thought of all their wrongs. We may be sure the clerk would go on counting and making notes as long as possible. Then, when quietness had been restored and weapons put away, other questions would come. "How much plough land is there here? How many ploughs has the lord? How many cattle and sheep does the estate feed? How many miles of forests are there? How many pigs feed on the acorns and beech-nuts beneath the trees? What fish-ponds, mills, quarries, or salt works does the estate possess? How many free-men and villeins are there? And what lands and ploughs have they? How much does the owner get from all his estate each year? Is the value going up or declining?" The chosen men would answer all this fairly well, because in a village every one knows all there is to know about his neighbours and their ploughs and fields and cattle. Sometimes, however, the men might argue together about some point, and have to ask for more men to be called up to help them, or perhaps for some old grandfather whose memory went very far back. Sometimes they even dared to say that the king himself or some other Norman lord who held an estate had no right to it. That was a bold thing to do. When they made answer like that perhaps they looked to the sheriff to see whether he was likely to protect them against the Norman.

When all the necessary questions had been answered in each county, and all the answers had been sent to Winchester, William caused the most important facts to be written down, county by county, in two volumes, in such a way that he could easily tell what estates any tenant-in-chief in the county had. These two volumes are called "Domesday Book." The book can still be seen, it lies in a glass case in the Record Office in London, but it has a new binding on it now. By inspecting this book William's officers could tell at once the value of each tenant-in-chief's estate, and therefore knew how much Danegeld he ought to pay. It is said that in an ordinary year William got about £5000 from this tax. In those days £5000 would buy as much as £100,000 in 1914. When the Norman barons heard the questions being asked about their estates, and knew that in future William would know exactly how much they owed, they must have been furious. The king had conquered England and won a crown with their help, and yet he intended to tax them heavily. But in this William could rely on his English fyrd, which hated Norman lords, and was willing to help the king to tax them.

The sheriffs also sat as presidents in the county courts. William liked to have as many cases as possible tried there, and as few as possible tried in his barons' courts. For he received all the fines from the county courts and none from the barons'.

The sheriffs collected other moneys besides Danegeld and fines for the king. They looked after his great estates. For William did not give away all the confiscated lands to his barons; he kept so many for himself that the rents came to about £20,000 a year. That money could buy in William's day about as much as £400,000 could in 1914. The sheriffs looked after the

royal farms, barns, cowhouses, ploughs, carts, horses, cattle, sheep, swine, and all the king's villeins. If the sheriff found that any farm needed new barns or supplies of iron for making repairs to ploughs, or salt for preserving meat, he paid the money out of the profits, and explained what he had done, when he saw the king's treasurer.

So William had two ways of governing England. He used his tenants-in-chief or barons to supply soldiers and money and to do justice. This is called the feudal way. And he used his sheriffs, the English fyrd, the old English tax, Danegeld, and the old English shire courts. He liked this second way best.

William was a busy man. But he found time for play. In Hampshire he made a new forest in which to enjoy hunting. It is still called the New Forest, although it is over eight hundred years old, and it still belongs to our present king, who is William's descendant.

CHAPTER XIV.—WHAT WILLIAM AND HIS NORMANS DID FOR THE CHURCH*

No sooner had William and his barons conquered England than they began to think about the need of reforming the English Church. Although Normans were fierce and cruel men, they were also very religious. In fits of passion they behaved like savages to their English peasants and to one another. And when their passion had subsided they often repented in tears. They feared God ; to win His forgiveness they prayed, fasted, did penance, and went on pilgrimage to Jerusalem, as King William's own father had done in 1034. Some of their priests, bishops, and abbots in Normandy had been fearless men, who did not fear to reproach them for their sins. The Normans knew that this was the right thing for clergymen to do. And in order that men might have places in which to pray and take Holy Communion, they built churches, and put priests in them from the best schools.

When they came to England they thought it a scandalous thing that priests should be married, and should get drunk in village alehouses and bishops' palaces. They were horrified when they met monks strolling about the countryside in ordinary clothes instead of singing, praying, and writing in their monasteries under the eye of their abbot. They thought that English bishops

* See P. P. Hists., Jun. Bk. IV., Chap. XIII.

were shamefully ignorant. To buy a bishopric or an abbacy for money was to the Norman mind a hideous sin.

William set to work to make great changes ; he remembered his promise to the Pope. He brought over his friend called Lanfranc, and made him Archbishop of Canterbury. Some English bishops were deposed, and some died ; Normans who knew no English were put in their places. Soon Wulfstan of Worcester was the only English bishop left in England. A great many English abbots were driven out of their abbeys to make room for Normans. The men William chose were not always as good bishops and abbots as they should have been. But most of them were very much better than the English ones. Many of them were William's own chaplains, and had done much work at his court in keeping the accounts of the royal treasury and in writing royal letters and other documents.

These new men were eager to have fine churches and abbeys. Many English churches had been burned down. Lanfranc had to rebuild his cathedral at Canterbury, and the new Archbishop of York had to do the same. But even where the English cathedrals and churches still stood the new bishops pulled them down, and set up others. The bishop, who did not do so, but contented himself with old English buildings, was despised by the others. Some were sorry to have to destroy old churches, and wept to see them pulled down. One bishop said, "What wretches we are ! We destroy the works of our saintly predecessors, because we think in our pride that we can build better ones."

The new cathedrals that were raised were very large ones. Lanfranc gave much money to help Abbot Paul of St. Albans to build the abbey church there ; it is

still the longest church in Great Britain. Paul built

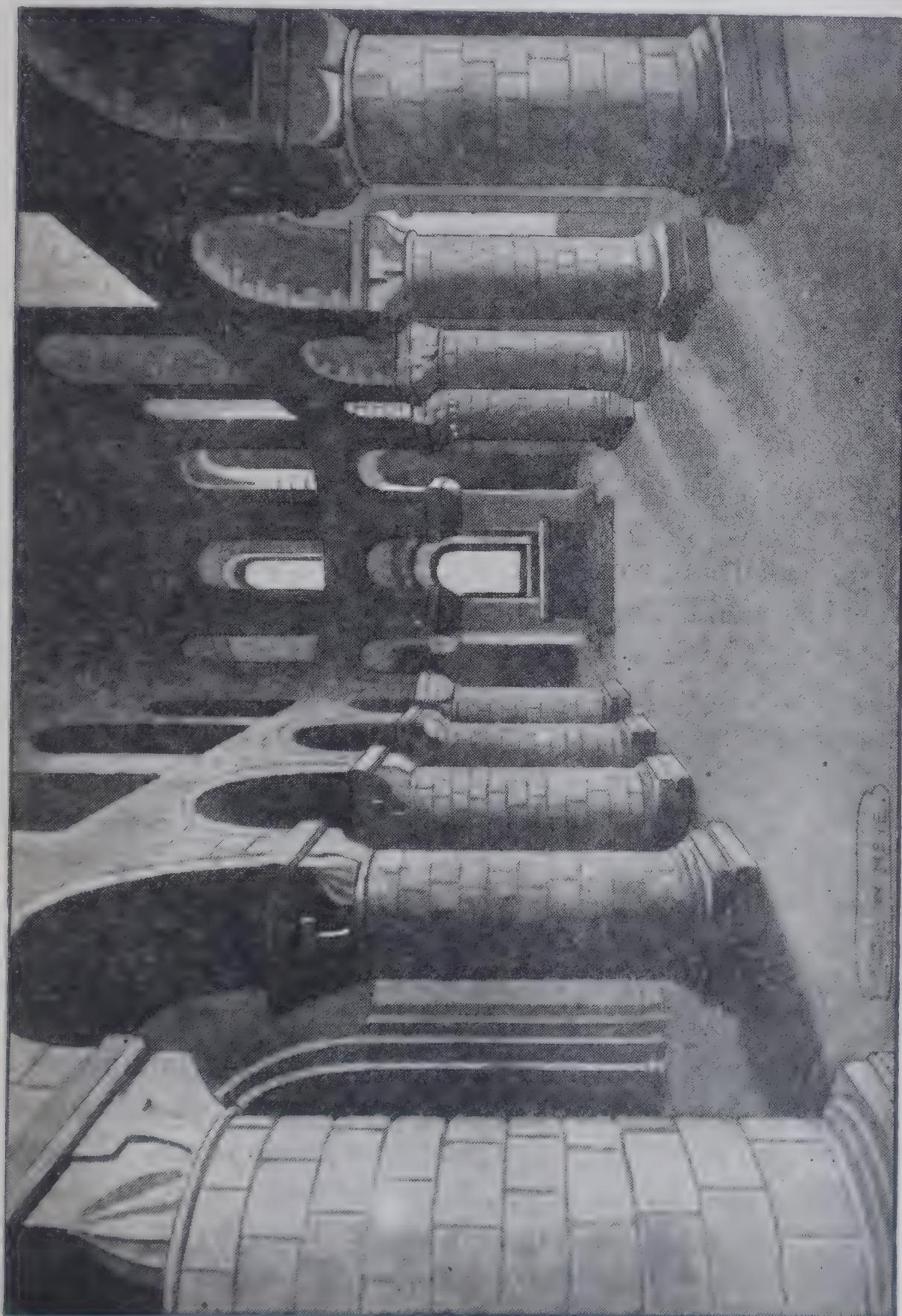


FIG. 45.—Norman Chapel in the Tower of London.

great part of it out of the Roman tiles, which he found close by among the ruins of the Roman city of Verulamium. A great part of his work still stands. The Roman tiles are so hard that, despite the storms of sixteen hundred years, their edges are almost as sharp as they were when they came from the kiln. The other cathedrals and abbey churches were large too. England in those days had only a population of two and a quarter millions, so people now wonder where the builders expected to find congregations large enough to fill them. But Normans built their churches as large as they could for the glory of God, and not because they expected them to be filled with people. Big churches, however, cost much money, and Norman bishops therefore sometimes raised the rents which their unhappy tenants paid.

Much of their work can still be seen. Their buildings were very solid, for the architects thought more about their strength than their beauty. No Norman builders had yet learned how to erect graceful, slender pillars, high-pointed arches, and wide windows with decorated stone tracery in them. Their great-grandchildren learned all this. The pillars of Norman architects were massive and thick; their arches were round and solid; their windows were small and round-headed; their doorways were round-topped too. When windows and doors were built, the architects set masons at work to carve quaint mouldings and patterns on them.

A great many cathedrals to-day can show somewhere about them some of these rounded arches and windows and doors, which prove that the Normans made them. Many, of course, have fallen down, for some were built in haste. The mortar often had not enough lime in it, and in course of time became powdery, so the walls and pillars fell. Sometimes the foundations were not well laid.

Even when good firm rock could be found a few feet down, the Norman builders were sometimes too lazy to dig deep enough. Sometimes marshy ground was chosen for a cathedral site. Recently thousands of pounds have been spent at Winchester to strengthen the foundations of the Norman Cathedral there. The site is such a wet one that any pits made to enable workers to reach



FIG. 46.—A Norman Church at Porchester.

the base of the walls always filled with water. So divers had to be employed.

Building must have been difficult work in those days. Even to-day the stones used in building a cathedral are often so big that it takes two great horses to pull one on a lorry along our smooth roads. But in Norman times there were no good roads, except here and there a Roman one. So stones had to be carried on horses' backs, or put on to barges and transported by water. The

stones for Chichester Cathedral came from Caen in Normandy. So you will not be surprised to hear that the stones which Norman masons used were generally about one foot square. Some men grudged all the money that was spent on building. The English bishop Wulfstan said, "We heap up stones to build churches and neglect souls."

Englishmen hated these Norman churchmen, whose language they could not understand. Bishop Walcher, of Durham, worked hard at rebuilding the abbey of Whitby, where Caedmon had learned to sing, and the abbey at Jarrow, where Bede wrote his history. But his servants slew an Englishman, and the people gathered round the church where bishop and servants had taken refuge. Some wanted to discuss the matter, and make some arrangement for punishing the servants. But the mob shouted, "Short rede is good rede. Slay the bishop." "Rede" means "advice." So Walcher and his men were killed. William sent soldiers to take revenge, and burn the county of Durham in punishment.

Bishops had to go about with a body of soldiers to protect them. Even then they were frightened. The Archbishop of York asked Wulfstan, the English bishop of Worcester, to do his work for him in the wilds of Yorkshire, where Englishmen were living in such misery among their ruined homes, that no Norman dared go near them. Even Lanfranc had to call for Wulfstan's help in the Midlands.

English monks hated Norman abbots. Abbots had to take soldiers to guard them when they went to their monasteries. At the Abbey of St. Augustine at Canterbury the monks had to be starved into submission. Next year one of them was found out in a plot to murder the new abbot. Lanfranc ordered him to be stripped and

flogged in public before the abbey gate, and then expelled him from the town. At Glastonbury the new abbot ordered the English monks to adopt a Norman way of singing in place of their old-fashioned way. When they refused, he sent for his archers. These men climbed up into the lofty galleries of the church, and then shot their arrows at the monks below. Three were slain and eighteen wounded. William thought the abbot was too hot-tempered, and sent him home to Normandy.

But all abbots were not like the Glastonbury one. Most of them were better men than their English predecessors, and their monks learned that the old easy days were over. Services had to be attended to night and day. No man might leave the monastery except when his abbot for special reasons gave him leave. Food was better regulated. Fasting was insisted on in Lent and at the proper times. Many monks became students of good books.

It was easier to change the habits of the monks than to change the habits of priests living in the little English towns and villages. Many Norman bishops had good schools where young men were well taught the duties of a priest; and when these new priests began to enter the villages they must have tried to rule their people more firmly than the old ones. They probably thought less about hunting, drinking, and marrying, and more about studying, saying their services, teaching their people, imposing penances and fasting for sins, compelling men, women, and children to come to church, baptising infants, teaching boys and girls for confirmation, visiting the sick, repairing the churches, and putting a stop to hunting and selling on Sundays.

But probably very few villages had in them priests of the new kind. Most priests in Norman times were

Englishmen who loved the old English ways and continued to do as they had done in the past. And the Norman bishops had to put up with them and their wives and their habits of drinking and their ignorance. Great changes could only be made very slowly, especially when dioceses were large like Norman ones, and when properly trained priests from the bishops' schools were few.

In one way, however, a great change was made. The new bishops and the new priests found that it was difficult in England to get sinners punished. When the priests accused men of not going to church, of not bringing children to be baptised, of drinking, hunting, and selling on Sundays, of feasting on fast days, of quarrelling and fighting with their wives, or of other sins, the old-fashioned English courts, where the ordinary people were the judges, either let off the accused with a light punishment, or inflicted none at all. Englishmen did not like these new priests and all their stern ways. So the priests and bishops began to wish that bishops could set up courts of their own, where a clergyman appointed for the purpose could be a judge, and inflict proper punishments. Until this was done they thought their villagers would go on sinning and would lose all hopes of heaven.

CHAPTER XV.—HOW NORMAN NOBLES DID AS THEY LIKED FOR ONCE *

WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR died in 1087. William Rufus his son reigned after him from 1087 till 1100, and then Henry Beauclerk, another son, reigned from 1100 till 1135. "Rufus" means "red"; "Beauclerk" means "well educated." Both these kings had to fight against some of their barons. The barons thought they could resist the kings with the help of their mound castles and knights and other soldiers. But both William Rufus and Henry called on the English to lend their help by coming to the fyrd. "Come and help," said William, "or I shall call you nithings." "Nithing" means something worse than "coward," and no Englishman could endure that. Moreover, they hated Norman barons, and thought it a good thing to help the kings to defeat them. So they picked up their spears and battleaxes, joined the sheriff, and marched away with right good will to help the sons of William the Conqueror against the sons of the Normans who had won the battle of Hastings. These Englishmen fought so well that both Rufus and Beauclerk defeated their enemies, drove them out of the land, and seized their lands and castles. No other kings in Western Europe could defeat their great nobles so easily. Englishmen did not love their Norman kings, but they respected them, and were glad to help

* See P. P. Hists., Jun. Bk. III., The Empress Matilda.

them against the cruel barons, whom they loathed with a very hearty hatred. So the Norman nobles were kept in order, and paid the taxes which the kings demanded. Some of the greatest of them were kept in prison all their lives.

But after Henry Beauclerk's death in 1135 war began in England. Henry's son, William, had been drowned in the wreck of the *White Ship*. The barons had promised to accept the king's daughter, Matilda, as queen. She was the wife of Geoffrey, Count of Anjou. But many of the nobles disliked having a woman to rule over them, and broke their promise by choosing a Frenchman called Stephen of Blois as king. He was the son of Adela, a daughter of William the Conqueror, and was therefore Henry's nephew.

Stephen and Matilda prepared to fight one another for the crown. Each of them had to buy help from the English barons and bishops, for these were the men who had soldiers and castles and money. So the barons began to say to themselves, "Whatever I do, Matilda and Stephen will be loath to fall out with me, for each wants my help against the other. So I shall build more castles on mounds, fill them with soldiers, and do what I like to the peasants round about. These fellows have money saved up, and hidden in the floors and chimneys of their huts. I shall torture them till I find out where it is. I shall impose heavier fines than ever in my court. Perhaps I shall be able to persuade Stephen or Matilda to make me sheriff of the county in which I live. Then I shall have the royal estates of the county to manage, and shall get money from them as well as from my own. And I shall then sit as president in the county court, and get most of the fines there, and seize the property of all criminals, and fine all men who do not come to court

to act as judges. And the royal castles will be in my charge. And when war is going on I shall command all my own knights, all the king's knights in the county, and the whole fyrd as well. When the king or queen orders a Danegeld to be collected, the money will come first into my hands. And they will not like to examine my accounts too closely, for if one of them does so I shall join the other side. Perhaps I may even become an earl." An earl was a noble of higher rank than a mere baron.

Many a noble thought like this. Castles began to rise all over the country. It was possible in those days to build quite a good wooden castle in eight days, and a very fine one in a month. Of course stone castles took much longer, but these were very rare indeed. The peasants were compelled to do all the necessary digging, and to fell all the timber that was needed. Then foreign soldiers of a cruel kind were put into the castles. While they pretended to fight for Matilda or Stephen, they rode about the country-side, burned towns, killed the citizens, carried off cattle, sheep, crops, and other property and levied blackmail on the survivors. Any one who was supposed to possess gold or silver was cast into castle dungeons, and tortured till he disclosed the hiding place of his treasures. The description of the tortures are almost too horrible to read, but they should be known, so that all may realise how necessary it was to have kings able to keep nobles in order. Prisoners were hung by ropes, head downward, over smoky fires ; some were suspended for long times by their thumbs ; some were forced with great pain into boxes that were too small to hold them. Many men, in order to escape, gave up all that they had.

One of the most cruel of the robbers was Geoffrey

de Mandeville. His home was in Essex, and if you look at a map of the county you will still see his French name "Mandeville" upon it. For a time he prospered. Stephen made him Earl of Essex ; then Matilda won him to her side by doing the same thing, and giving him castles, revenues, and the office of Sheriff of Essex as well. Stephen bought him back by making him Sheriff of Hertfordshire, Middlesex, and London, as well as Sheriff of Essex. Then he was found to be planning another bargain with Matilda, so Stephen attacked him suddenly, and took away all his power and possessions. But he was foolishly merciful to him, and let him go free.

In revenge Geoffrey gathered around him all the scoundrels of Eastern England, and seized Ramsey Abbey amid the fens. The monks were driven out into the cold of a December morning in their nightshirts. The abbey was made into a fortress ; horses were stabled in the cloisters, where monks had worked and walked to and fro. The gold and silver vessels of the church were carried off, and the lands of the abbey were given to Geoffrey's robber friends. With the help of reinforcements he attacked Cambridge, took it, plundered it, and burned it. The people of every village for twenty miles round feared that his men would attack and pillage their farmhouses or their churches. His spies went about disguised as beggars, the more easily to discover who had stores of food and money put away in hiding. Doors were burst open at night ; peasants and priests were seized in their beds, and tortured till they disclosed where their wealth was. Soon neither ox nor plough was to be seen. Then famine came upon the neighbourhood ; grain could not be bought for food or seed. Hundreds and thousands of men and women

dropped dead of starvation on the roadside, and lay unburied. The misery was so intense that even the living desired to die. At last relief came to the fen country when Geoffrey was slain by one of Stephen's archers in 1144.

But there were plenty of other men who plundered in other places as Geoffrey in the fens, and for nine years more English villages were at their mercy. But in 1153 Stephen made peace with Matilda's son, Henry of Anjou, on condition that he should be king as long as he lived, and that then Henry should succeed him. For one year longer Stephen reigned, and then in 1154 Henry ascended the throne. He soon taught the nobles a lesson. We shall read of it in the next chapter.

CHAPTER XVI.—HOW HENRY II. KEPT ORDER IN ENGLAND *

HENRY PLANTAGENET, who succeeded Stephen on the throne, was a young man of wide possessions. His father, Geoffrey Plantagenet, was Count of Anjou. His mother, Matilda, was the daughter of Henry the First, or Beauclerk, and so had claims on Normandy and England. But young Henry had married a woman called Eleanor of Aquitaine, who possessed very large territories in France. If you look at the map you will see them marked by the names of Aquitaine and Gascony. Henry was only twenty-one years old when he became master of all these lands, and he ruled them for thirty-five years.

France is a sunny, happy country, and Henry's lands were the sunniest and happiest parts of all. They were not too hot in summer nor too cold in winter. In the south in Aquitaine his subjects tended vineyards and made wine ; they were famous for their songs. Through Anjou flows the lovely river of the Loire, with vineyards, forests, pastures, and cornfields on its banks. So beautiful is this valley that English people to-day love to visit it, especially in the spring. They say that at that time every one in the valley is gay and happy. But everywhere can be seen ruins of castles in which, in the old days, cruel nobles lived. From the tops of their tumbling walls the tourist can look across miles of lovely woodlands, fields, and

* See P. P. Hists., Sen. Bk. I., Part III., Chap. III.

rolling hills, but when he visits their prisons deep below

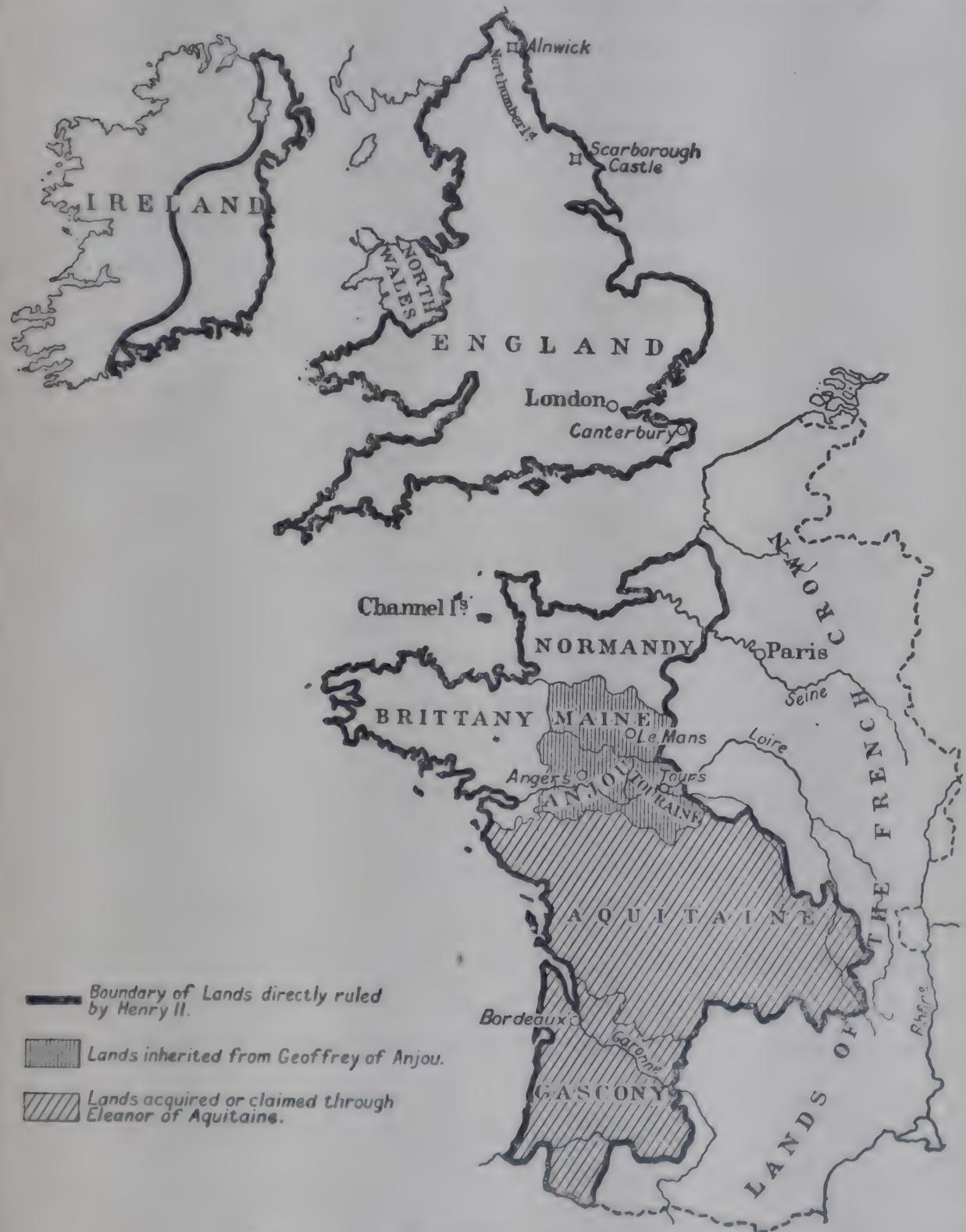


FIG. 47.—The Dominions of Henry II.

he thinks that the people of the past were not so happy as those of to-day.

The chroniclers of Henry's time have described him.

He was a very strong man, with a thick neck, broad shoulders and powerful arms and hands. From constant riding on horseback his legs had become bent. His head was large and round, his hair red and closely cut. His complexion was red and his voice was harsh. Whenever he had a chance he loved to go a-hunting all day over hills and moors and through woods. Nothing seemed to

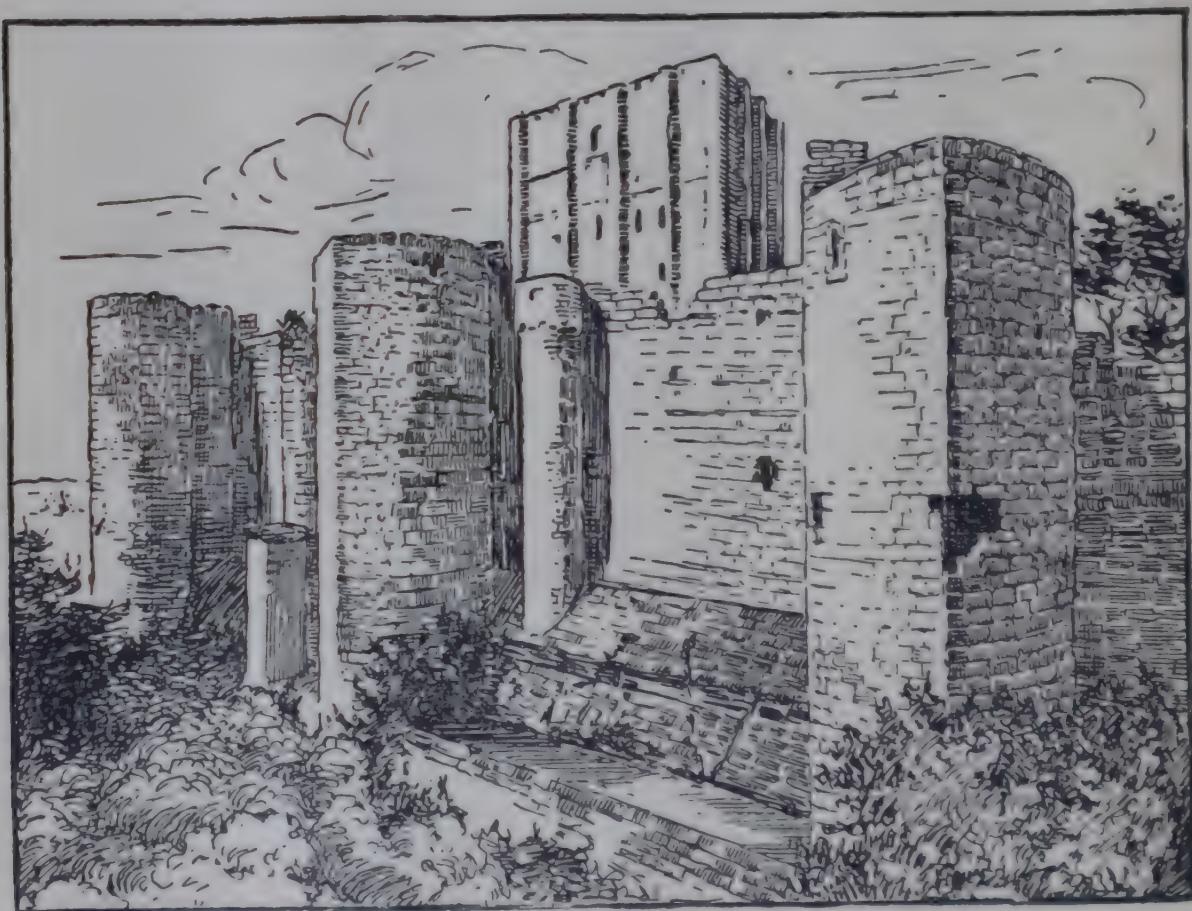


FIG. 48.—The Castle of Loches in Anjou.

It belonged to Henry Plantagenet, but only the great square tower in the centre was built in his day.

tire him. After a day's hunting he would never sit down even for supper, but would stand and walk about, quite forgetful of the blisters on his legs, which came from hard and continuous riding. His attendants grumbled to themselves in complete weariness, for no man might sit and rest while the king was standing. But Henry worked hard as well as played hard. Even after a day

like this he would suddenly send for his clerks and lawyers, and would begin to do business with them by the light of lanterns. Clerks who had followed him all day had to begin writing letters at his command, and sleepy lawyers had to discuss difficult matters about justice and government.

One writer has told us something about Henry's habits of travelling. "If the king has said that he intends to stop late in any place, you may be sure he will start very early in the morning, and with his sudden haste destroy everybody's plans. Then you will see men running about like mad, driving their pack-horses and running waggons into one another, and everything in dreadful confusion, as if hell had broken loose. But if the king has said that he will start early in the morning, you may be sure that he will snore till noon. Then you will see pack-horses drooping under their loads, waggons waiting, drivers dozing, merchants fretting, and every one grumbling at every one else." Sometimes, on the other hand, when the din was ended, and every one was asleep, a sudden message from the king's lodging would set all in commotion. Horsemen and footmen would begin to rush about in the darkness. Men would run to the nearest monastery and village to seize horses and carts for the king's use. Luggage, such as food, wine, documents, tents, account rolls would be packed up. Then the courtiers and their servants would begin to travel along vile roads, through rivers, over swamps and moors, through forests until, in a spot where there was no lodging except for himself, Henry would give orders to halt. Everybody's temper broke down, and the chronicler says you could see knights fighting against one another with swords to get possession of a pig-sty to sleep in. "Oh, Lord," he prays, "turn the king from

this troublesome habit, that he may show mercy to those who have to follow him."

Henry was always learning something. He loved to talk with wise men and ask questions. He understood many languages, but spoke only Latin and French. When he had time he read books. So he became a good scholar. One man wrote, "The King of England has school every day." He went to church every day. But even there he could not sit still or silent. His red head would go down over the pictures in his psalm-book, or he would draw pictures for himself, or whisper to his courtiers and do business, while the bishop or the royal chaplain and his assistants were singing or saying prayers.

He had an awful temper. Men said it came from the devil. When he was roused, his grey eyes blazed so that brutal barons were afraid of him. Sometimes his wrath was so great that he rolled on the floor, and chewed up the straw, sobbed and wept, cursed and waved his arms about. But at other times he allowed men to jostle up against him in a crowd without complaining. Barons could criticise him and his ways to his face without angering him. And any one who wished to see him could go to him at once either in chapel or bedroom or hall. Such were the ways of the man who in 1154 began to restore order in England.

He first determined to destroy the castles which the robber nobles had built in the reign of Stephen. Few men dared to resist. William of Aumâle, Earl of York-shire, had built a great stone castle on the heights of Scarborough, and Hugh Mortimer had strong castles on the borders of Wales. Against these two men Henry had to send armies. But in all other cases the owners obeyed Henry's orders, and their castles, which were merely wooden towers raised on earthen mounds, were

easily levelled with the ground. All the foreign soldiers, who had come to England to live in the castles and rob and torture Englishmen, were ordered to go home. Most of them came from Flanders, part of the country which to-day we call Belgium. They did not resist Henry's orders ; in fear they went away at once, and in great haste.

But Henry found that his English treasury did not receive nearly so much money as in the time of his grandfather, Henry Beauclerk. Stephen had given away many of the royal estates, and those which he had kept had been plundered by his enemies. Henry knew that he could not govern without money, so he ordered every man who held a royal estate to give it back at once. Every one obeyed. Then the sheriffs were ordered to rebuild the barns, to buy cows, horses, and sheep wherever these could be found, and to place them on the plundered estates. Seed was bought, and peasants set to work hopefully once more in the times of peace. And soon Henry was receiving about £8000 a year from his lands.

Thus many nobles found that they no longer had



FIG. 49.—The Ruins of Scarborough Castle.

castles. Neither had they such large estates. They could no longer keep so many soldiers. But many of them still had the large estates, which their ancestors had received after the Norman Conquest, and still kept knights to do warlike service for the king when he sent for them. Henry thought that this was dangerous, for nobles might use their knights to fight against the king and not for him. So when he needed soldiers to fight he used to say to his barons, "Instead of sending your knights to me, collect money from them and send that." This money was called "scutage," or "shield money." With it Henry hired soldiers whom he could trust. And the barons began slowly to give up having knights on their lands, and lent the lands to farmers and others, who were not able to manage heavy armoured horses or to wield long lances. In this way barons became less dangerous to the king.

Henry became so strong that he was able to forbid barons to try men accused of crimes like murder in their courts. The barons liked to try these cases, for all the property of murderers was confiscated by them. But Henry wanted the money for himself. So the barons submitted. Whenever a murder was committed on their lands, the sheriffs came along and said the case must be tried in the county court before travelling judges sent out by the king. The accused was seized by the sheriff's officers, and put in gaol till the king's judges arrived.

The barons were enraged against their king, but for long they did not dare to rebel. At last, in 1170, something happened which made them think God would certainly punish Henry. A quarrel had long been going on between the king and his Archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas à Becket. Henry complained that bishops did not keep bad clergymen in order. He wished to make

better arrangements for punishing them, but Thomas resisted him for a long time. At last four of Henry's friends murdered Thomas in his own cathedral. All men were horrified, and the barons watched eagerly to see what punishment would fall on the king. In 1172 Henry's sons rebelled against him. The kings of France and Scotland joined them. At once all the angry barons saw their opportunity, and rebelled also.

But Henry was ready for them. He had fortified his castles. We can still read in his accounts how he spent money in buying corn, cheese, salt, ropes, stone-throwing machines, iron, and in repairing walls.

The sheriffs called out their fylds, and the people answered very willingly. They remembered Stephen's reign, and knew what would happen to them if the nobles defeated the king. Henry was everywhere at once, now in France, now in England; his enemies never knew where he would appear next, and wherever he went he won victories. We hear of him travelling 140 miles in two days to help some soldiers of his. That meant very hard riding on horseback. No doubt many horses died on the journey. The chronicler says the king forgot both food and sleep, and flew like a bird. Another time we read of him crossing the English Channel when sailors expected a dreadful storm. His servants in England had begged earnestly for his help against the rebel barons and the King of Scots, so nothing would prevent him from sailing.

As soon as he had landed he rode to Canterbury to do penance where Thomas à Becket was buried, for he hoped in this way to win the help of God against the rebel barons. At the gate of the city he dismounted, put on a plain gown, and walked barefoot through rough and dirty streets to the cathedral. At the door

he knelt and prayed. He was taken to the spot where Becket had been murdered ; he kissed it and wept over it. He then confessed his sins, and went to Becket's tomb ; he lay on his face in prayer before it for some time. Then he took off his gown, knelt once more before the tomb, thrust his head through one of the holes in the stone work of it, and allowed each bishop who was present to give him five blows with a lash on his bare back, and each monk to give him three. In this way he received nearly 300 stripes. The night following he spent lying hungry on the cold floor beside the tomb.

He reached London two days later, and took to his bed, worn out with suffering, fasting, and anxiety. Three days after, at midnight, a messenger came to his bedroom door. "Who art thou ?" cried the king. "A messenger with good tidings from the north," came the answer. "Your enemy the King of Scots lies a captive in chains at Richmond." Henry leaped from his bed with tears in his eyes, and gave thanks to God. And the Londoners set their church bells ringing to spread the joyful news. The day after Henry's penance at Canterbury the King of Scots had been taken prisoner by Henry's soldiers at Alnwick in Northumberland. The rebellion came to an end in England ; so three weeks after his return to England Henry recrossed to Normandy, taking the King of Scots with him as a prisoner. In six more weeks his French enemies and his sons made peace also.

Henry found the fyrd so useful during the rebellion that he issued strict orders to the sheriffs to see that every man in it had proper weapons. Sometimes men let their weapons get rusty and useless, or did not buy good ones when old ones were worn out. But the king

ordered each man to have the weapons he could afford to buy.² Men who had about £6* a year were to have iron helmets, a shirt of mail and a spear; men who had less were to have a padded jacket, an iron helmet and a lance. This armour was never to be sold, but was to descend from father to son. No man dared after this to come to the fyrd with an old hay-fork or a scythe tied to a pole. Whoever disobeyed was not let off with a fine; he was deprived of a hand or an eye.

But Henry never needed to call out the fyrd again.

* That is, about £100 in present-day money.

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CHAPTER XVII.—THE CRUSADE OF RICHARD I.*

ABOUT 570 years after the birth of Christ a man called Mahomet was born in Arabia. He became a great preacher. He said that Jesus Christ was not the Son of God, but only a prophet, and that there was only one God called Allah. This new religion spread fast near the Arabian towns of Mecca and Medina about the time when the Northumbrians were being converted to Christianity. The people who adopted it were called Mohammedans. They made a bible, called the Koran, out of Mahomet's sayings. They became great soldiers and conquered Egypt, Syria, and Persia. Everywhere they took the Koran with them, and compelled the conquered people to become Mohammedans or to pay them tribute. Palestine is part of Syria. So these men, who said that Christ was not the Son of God, became rulers of Bethlehem, Nazareth, and Jerusalem, and built a mosque or Mohammedan church where Solomon's temple once stood. The Christians of Europe often made pilgrimages to those places ; for they thought that prayers for forgiveness, when they were offered up there, where Christ had lived and died, were always heard and granted by God. The pilgrims, when they had returned home, said that Christians ought to reconquer the Holy Land from men

* See P. P. Hists. :—

Sen. Bk. I., Part III., Story of the First Crusade.
Jun. Bk. III., Richard I. at the Crusade.

who did not believe in Christ. They called the Mohammedans Unbelievers or Infidels.

But for many hundreds of years Christians did not trouble much about this, because Mohammedans, soon after they had conquered Palestine, became more tolerant, and allowed Christians to worship in Jerusalem. But about the time when William the Conqueror came to



FIG. 50.—The Mohammedan Mosque or Church which stands on the site of Solomon's Temple at Jerusalem.

England and won his victory at Hastings, a very cruel race of men, called the Seljuk Turks, came out of Central Asia. They were converted to Mohammedanism, and became very bitter persecutors of Christians. Often they refused to let pilgrims, who had come hundreds of miles, enter Jerusalem at all. Every one in Europe thought this ought to be stopped.

At last, in 1095, when William Rufus was king, a

great army collected. The soldiers in it put the sign of the Cross on their clothes, and called themselves Crusaders or Soldiers of the Cross. After a long march through Europe to Constantinople, and then through Asia Minor to Palestine, they conquered Antioch, Jerusalem and other places. They made a kingdom of Jerusalem, and chose a man called Godfrey to rule over it. He gave



FIG. 51.—A Crusader unhorses a Mohammedan.
From an old picture.

lands to the nobles. They built great castles, and gave lands to knights, just as the Normans had done in England. Instead of English peasants they had Mohammedan ones to cultivate their lands. The vast ruins of their castles still remain, perched on the top of lofty crags, to astonish the traveller of to-day. The Crusaders built with stone; you can see one of their castles in the picture.

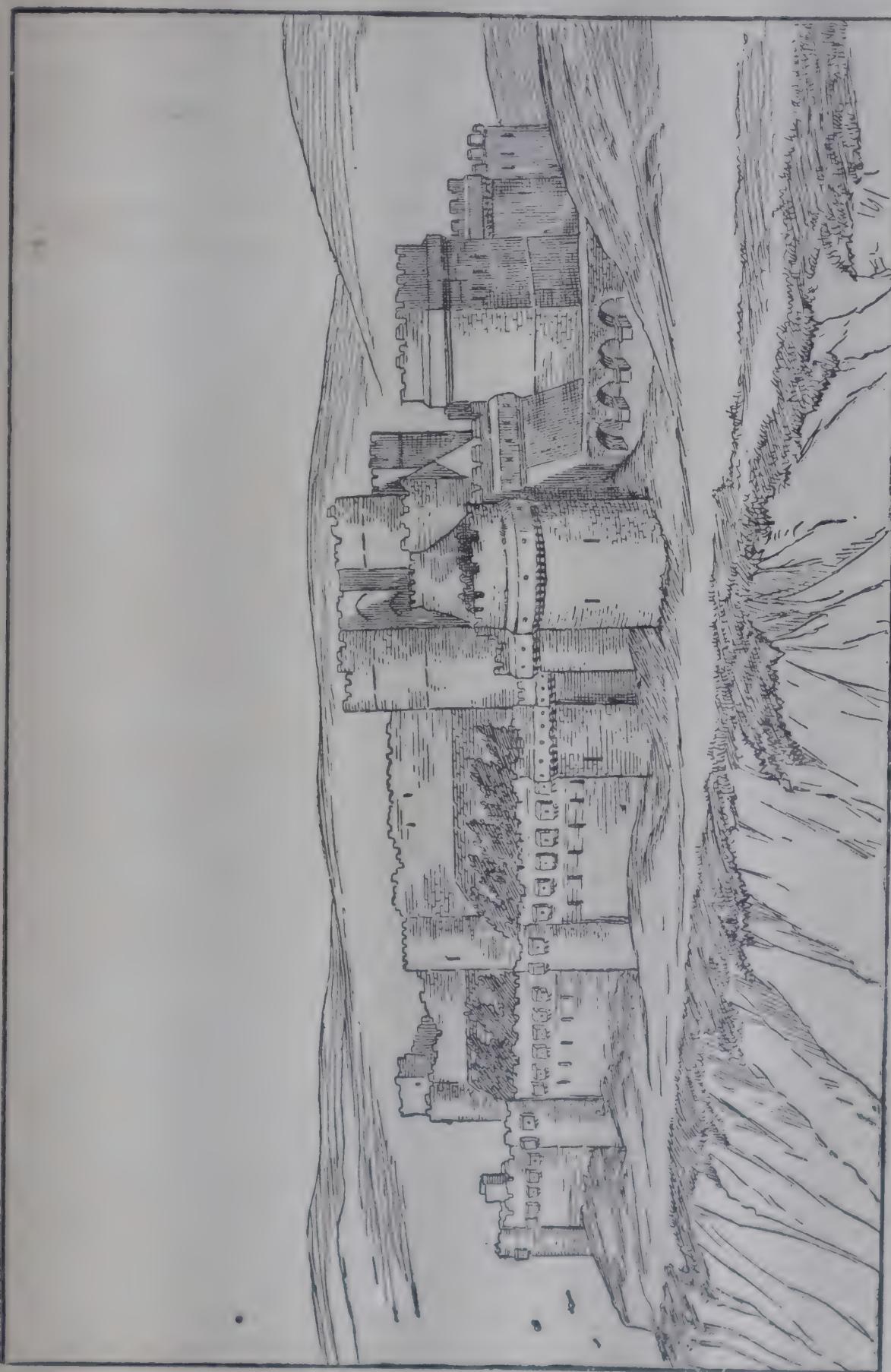


FIG. 52.—Kurds' Castle, built by Crusaders in Syria.

It was a fair land which the Crusaders had conquered. It was still rich in flocks and herds as in the days when Joshua's spies had entered it. In the north was the great mountain range of Lebanon, where the King of Tyre had cut cedar trees for Solomon's temple. There were famous and beautiful rivers like the Jordan and Orontes. In the Crusading time the mountains were still covered with woods. The valleys were filled with fields of rice, corn, and cotton. Lemon trees, orange trees, and olive trees grew in groves. There were also grassy uplands, where flocks could feed, and barren, flinty deserts, where no living thing could find food. The heat of summer was very great. But in the winter sleet and snow whitened the mountain tops, and rain filled the valleys with mud, which made travel impossible. The camel was the beast of burden, and a traveller, standing on a hill top, could see long lines of camels marching from well to well across the brown Syrian desert.

Between the Crusaders and the Mohammedans there was almost always war. At first the Christians were successful, but at last in 1183 a Mohammedan called Saladin, who belonged to a finer race than the Turks, became ruler of all the lands that lay around the kingdom of Jerusalem, from Egypt to the Euphrates. Among his subjects were many learned men. Wealthy Mohammedan chiefs loved to found well-built colleges, just as Norman nobles founded monasteries. Poetry and history were carefully studied. Algebra was first taught by Mohammedans. Famous astronomers examined the heavens. Learned professors attracted students to their college lectures from great distances. Every one who could read studied the Koran; and boys were taught to say a great deal of it by heart, as boys nowadays in England learn passages from the Bible.

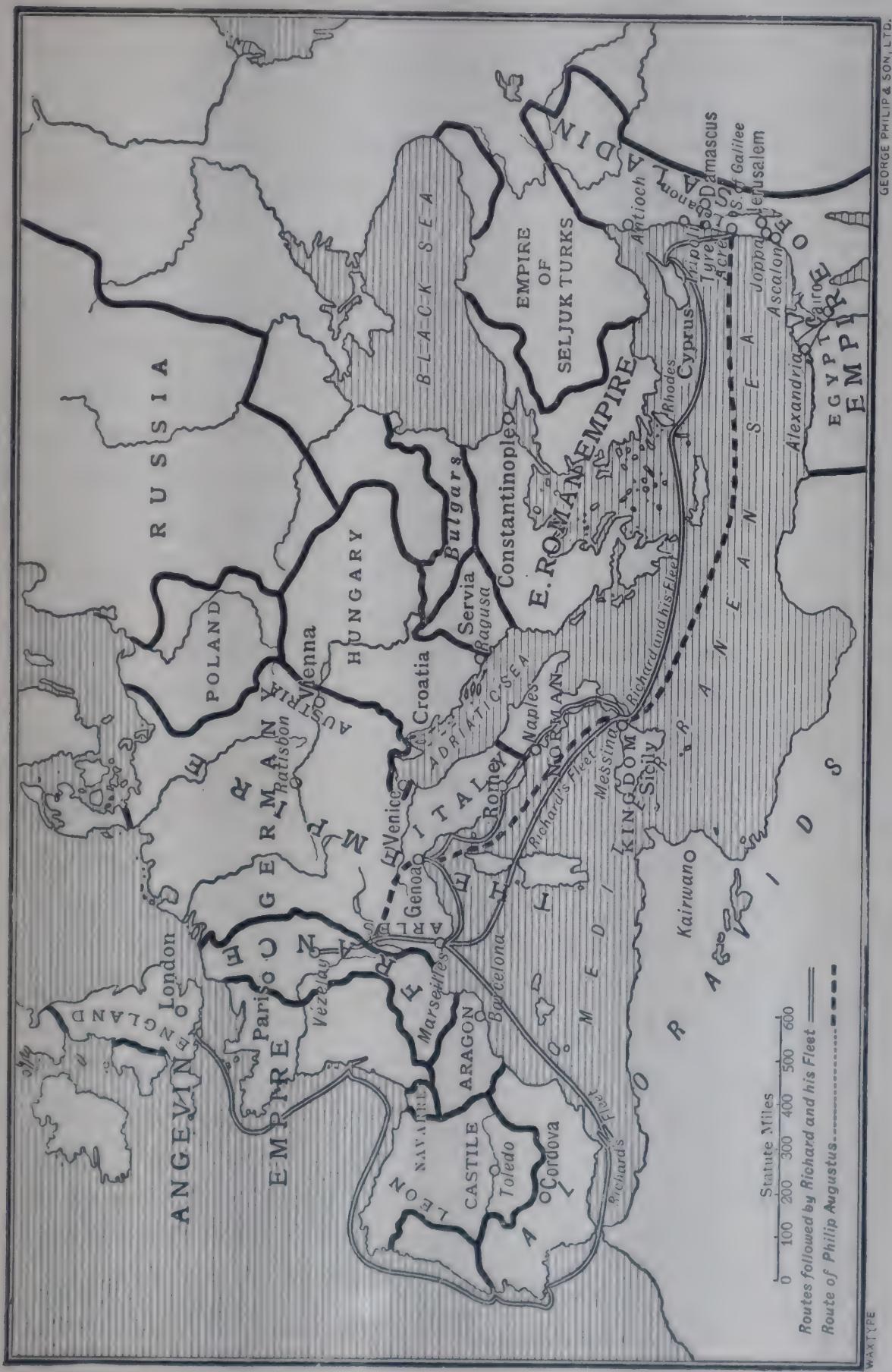


FIG. 53.—The Crusaders' Voyage to Acre.

Every one was very religious, and careful to say his prayers at the right time. Lying was hated. It was the mark of a gentleman to keep one's word ; it is said that the Mohammedan warriors were more careful in this than the Christian Crusaders. All educated men strove to have quiet, gentlemanly manners, and loved good conversation.

Saladin himself as a youth was quiet and studious, loving poetry and religious books. He learned the art of war very much against his will. But his love for the Mohammedan faith made him eager to drive all Christians out of Palestine. So he became a great and courageous general. The war against the Christians was, in his mind, a Holy War. He called it a "Jehad." But even in the midst of it he longed for peace. He did not fight cruelly. It was only when some Christian Crusader broke his word, or insulted the Mohammedan religion, that Saladin's wrath blazed out. At such moments he could slay his prisoners in cold blood. But to an honourable foe he showed honour, as you will read. And to helpless Christian women and children, whom his soldiers captured in the conquered towns of Palestine, he showed great kindness. He could not bear to see them weep. He even released their husbands, who had fought against him, rather than cause them sorrow. Many men on being released immediately began to fight against him again.

The great war, however, did not begin till 1187. Till then Saladin had a little time to spend in his city of Damascus. That town was famous for the beauty of its rivers, its grassy lawns, its poplar grove, and its buildings. Saladin and his sons delighted in playing the game called polo ; in this game players are mounted on swift ponies, and pursue a ball, which they smite with long

wooden clubs. Some say that Saladin was too impetuous and overran the ball, just as boys sometimes do at football. He played chess too. But he worked hard, as well as played hard. His servants were kept busy. Letters were so numerous that two kinds of letter carriers were needed, men on horseback and pigeons; the men rode from stable to stable and changed horses at each stage. The pigeons flew from cot to cot.

In 1187 Saladin beat the Christians in a great battle near the Sea of Galilee at a little hill where Christ is said to have preached the Sermon on the Mount. Three months later he captured Jerusalem. And soon out of all the kingdom, which Godfrey had ruled nearly a hundred years before, only the seaport of Tyre remained in Christian hands.

All Europe was filled with sadness at the news; monks put on sackcloth. The Pope promised forgiveness of sins to all who would go forth to recover Jerusalem. Henry II., Philip Augustus King of France, and the Emperor of Germany put the cross on their clothes and promised to go. But Henry II. died in 1189, so his son Richard of the Lion Heart took his place.

Then arose great din of preparation. English knights donned their armour and rode away from little English



FIG. 54.—A Crusading Knight.
From a figure on a tomb.

villages. Many sold their lands or pawned them to buy horses and weapons. King Richard, too, sold lands and even offices. Some bad men bribed him to make them sheriffs. They wished to have the right to collect the King's taxes, and when they had it they meant to keep back some money for themselves.

From seaports a hundred ships were collected. They were of the kind called galleys ; that means that they had a mast and a sail, but that they trusted most to oars as a means of moving. They had a beak or ram at the bows, which was intended to crash into the enemy's ships. Each galley had three spare rudders, or steering oars, thirteen anchors, thirty spare oars, two extra sails, and three sets of all kinds of ropes. Besides a captain and fifteen sailors, every large ship carried forty horsemen, forty horses, forty foot-soldiers, fourteen servants, and twelve months' provisions for all. Richard's ship was called by a French name which meant "Cleave the Sea."

Richard joined his fleet at Messina in Sicily. As he was on his way through France he had made rules for his sailors to obey. Here are two. "Any one who kills another on board ship shall be tied to the dead body and thrown overboard." "Any one lawfully convicted of theft shall have his head shaved, and boiling pitch poured on it. Then feathers or down shall be spread upon it." King Philip Augustus had made rules too ; no one was to gamble for money unless he were a knight or a clergyman, and even they were not to lose more than twenty shillings in one day. Gambling sailors were to be keel-hauled, that is, dragged with ropes from one side of the ship underneath the keel to the other side.

At last in August, 1189, the two kings reached Palestine. They found that all the Christians were

besieging the seaport of Acre. That town lay on a point of land jutting into the sea ; the Christians were encamped under its walls ; and Saladin and his men were posted on the hills further off. So the Christians were between two armies. When Richard and Philip arrived they had been in this condition for two years already. All provisions had been eaten up ; a sack of corn cost

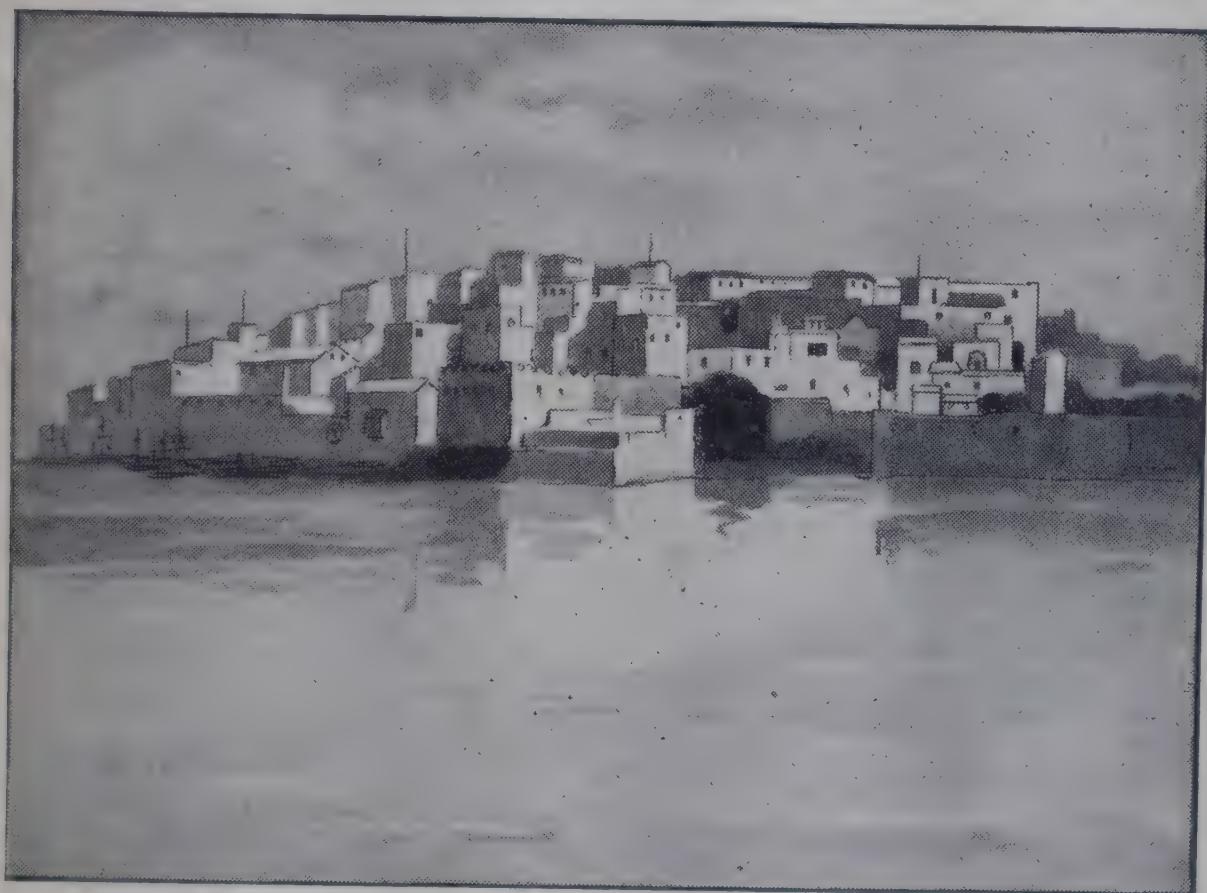


FIG. 55.—Acre from the Sea, as it may have looked at the time of the Crusades.

a hundred pieces of gold ; horses were killed for food ; common people ate grass and gnawed bones ; nobles stole for a living. When spring came, the rains killed many with fever.

But Richard and Philip encouraged everybody. They set up wooden engines which threw great stones against the walls of Acre. One of these was called God's Sling. A priest always stood by it preaching and collecting

money to repair it and pay men, who gathered stones for it. The Mohammedans also had slings and a liquid called Greek Fire, which burst into a flame, when it was sprinkled over anything. It burnt some of the Crusaders' ships. Richard soon fell ill of fever, but he lay on cushions in a little hut not far from the walls, and shot at the Unbelievers, and killed many. He also set men to undermine and to destroy the city wall.

But amid all this bloodshed there was some kindness. One day a Christian woman, whose baby girl had been carried off, came to Saladin's sentries in search for it. The sentries bade her go to Saladin, telling her he was a man of great kindness. When the great man saw her he ordered his camp to be searched till the baby was found. Then both were sent safely home.

At last in July, 1191, Acre surrendered to the Christians. On August 22 King Richard began to march along the coast to Joppa, intending to turn thence against Jerusalem. Although the distance from Acre to Joppa was only sixty miles, it took twenty days for the army to march it, for the enemy made constant attacks. The Christians also suffered from the burning sun, which beat upon their iron headpieces and shirts of mail, till sunstroke and thirst overcame them. At last after a great battle they reached Joppa and the shade of its orchards on September 10, and there they rested.

But still Jerusalem and Calvary were in the hands of Saladin. It was not till the end of October that the Crusaders marched out from Joppa. They reached a point almost within sight of Jerusalem, and then after weeks of delay turned back. For the weather was very bad. Rain and wind together made camp life impossible. Tents were torn up: horses perished of cold and wet. Food and biscuit were ruined, and the bacon rotted.

Armour and breastplates were spoiled with rust, so that no amount of rubbing would restore them to their early brightness ; clothes wore out. Health was destroyed. To face a long siege of Jerusalem was impossible. And the leaders knew that, once the city was taken, most soldiers would offer up their prayers at the Holy Sepulchre, and go home, leaving no one to defend the place. So the army turned back to Joppa in January.

Once in May, 1192, Richard, when pursuing some of the enemy, “ raised his eyes and on a sudden beheld the Holy City afar off.” He could not bear to look upon it, but veiled his face with his coat, and prayed to God that he might not see it, if he could not deliver it.

Fever attacked him again ; he called constantly for fruit, and Saladin, like the gentleman he was, sent him pears and peaches and snow from mountain tops. At last the leaders made peace. Saladin agreed that the Crusaders should hold the coast towns and that all pilgrims should be allowed to enter the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem and to pray there. Saladin went home to Damascus, and four months later he died, worn out with his long holy war against the Christians.

As for Richard, he sailed away in October, 1192, but was shipwrecked in the Adriatic Sea, and captured by the Austrians. He lay in prison for thirteen months, until his subjects paid £75,000 as ransom. When he was set free he began almost at once to fight against King Philip of France. He fought for five years, and constantly sent to England for more money, until he was slain by an archer in 1199. He had not been a good king to England, but Englishmen admired him because of his great victories in the Holy War.

CHAPTER XVIII.—THE WINNING OF MAGNA CARTA

RICHARD had no children of his own, so in 1190 he had chosen his nephew Arthur, the son of his brother Geoffrey, to be his heir. But Arthur, at the time of his uncle's death, was only twelve years old. Richard's youngest brother John took advantage of this to seize the throne. Arthur's father had died in 1186, so he had no one to fight for him. King Philip of France became his friend, and the two made war on the wicked uncle. But John took Arthur by surprise. With furious energy he marched a hundred miles in less than two days and captured his nephew. Next Easter the boy disappeared. No one knows exactly what happened. Some men say that John killed his nephew with his own hands.



FIG. 56.—King John.
From an old monument.

The effect of the murder was very great. Almost all John's French subjects very willingly accepted Philip as their King. They were French in blood, and spoke French, and desired to be under a French king. Normandy, Maine, Anjou, and Touraine became Philip's in 1204. John discovered that his English barons would

not lend their help to fight his battles on French soil. So at last only Gascony and part of Poitou remained in English hands. These provinces grew grapes and made wine. Englishmen were their best customers. So the Gascons feared that if they changed sides their wine-carrying ships would not be so welcome at London Bridge as they had been in the past. John had defended his French lands so feebly that the French in scorn called him John Softsword.

John never gave up hopes that some day he might rule once more over his lost castles, lands, and knights. He was always trying to collect money for a French war, and this made him very hateful to his English nobles. He used every trick he could think of to get money. Kings in feudal times raised money in ways which we think very strange. On the death of a man who held lands from the King on condition of fighting for him, his heir was compelled to pay a sum of money called a "relief." Until the relief was paid the heir could not take possession of his father's castles and lands. In Henry Beauclerk's time it had been agreed that the King should only ask for "reasonable reliefs." But John took such costly ones that his nobles complained they were made into beggars. They had to go to money-lenders to borrow the money which the sheriff, the King's agent, demanded. If the son died soon after the father, more money had to be borrowed for another relief, and the next heir lived in beggary for a long time; his clothes were poor; his barns and ploughs went unmended, and his sisters had no fine dresses.

If the male heir of a military tenant were under twenty-one years of age, and so unable to do the military service, the King took possession of his estates until he became of age. The boy became the King's ward. John

used this right unfairly. He was so anxious to get money that, while he was the young lord's guardian, he gave freedom to villeins who could buy it. Many a villein who had scraped some savings together went to the secret hiding hole where he kept them, and drew out enough to satisfy the King's agent. In the future he did no more harvesting or sowing or ploughing or mouse-catching or ditching or thatching or fishing for the lord. He had become a free man. It was pleasant for the villein but not for the young lord. John also sold the woods on the estate, so that timber for fuel and building became scarce. And he refused to spend money on repairs to ploughs, barns, and cowhouses; so they decayed. He allowed men for money to take all the fish from the fish ponds. He sold the oxen, sheep, pigs, goats, and hens, corn and hay. So when the heir came of age, he found his estates were so poor that he and his mother, brothers, and sisters had scarcely enough to eat and wear for several years, until the cattle had once more increased in numbers, and the barns been filled.

Sometimes there was no one to succeed but a girl or a widow. Then John was even more pleased, for he had the right to choose a husband for her. Often he chose one of his friends who wanted a wealthy wife. If she refused to appear in church and marry the man he had chosen for her, she either lost all her lands, or had to pay much money. John's friends were often hateful men, so heiresses paid a good deal to escape marriage. We read of one widow who paid two hundred marks, three horses, and two hawks to the king to avoid marriage with a foreigner.

The king had the right in time of war to demand from knights instead of military service a payment called scutage or shield money. Henry II had not demanded

scutage very often. But John asked for it nearly every year, and sometimes twice a year. He even made knights pay scutage and fight as well in France. He also took money called aids from them.

As John's subjects began to hate him more and more, he made friends with foreigners. He gave them positions as judges and sheriffs, because he knew they would serve him well, and extort all the money they could from lords and common people. Sometimes these men punished without trial people who had offended their master. They sent soldiers against them, robbed them, and outlawed them for no reason, except that they had displeased the king. Even when John allowed his enemies to be tried, English nobles spoke out against the judges whom he appointed to try them. They said that the judges were lowborn foreigners, and unfit to try English noblemen.

The punishments inflicted by John's courts were very severe. For small faults men were so severely fined that they had to sell lands or goods or ploughs and oxen to raise the money. Sometimes John and his officers took away all a man's property as a fine, and made him and his family beggars.

John ruled badly in so many ways that it is possible to mention only two more points. Often when he intended to go hunting birds with his hawk upon his fist, he sent orders to the district, where he was to enjoy the chase, to have all the bridges repaired so that he could ride across, and follow his hawk as it chased birds through the air. So Englishmen had to leave their farms to attend to his wishes. If he found the bridges unrepaired he fined the men who lived in the neighbourhood, even if they were not legally bound to mend bridges. Naturally the country folk were angry.

The royal officers whose duty it was to collect provisions for the King often seized corn on sale in the market-places, and either paid nothing for it or paid very little after a long time. Often they took freemen's horses and carts to carry the royal food or luggage when the King was travelling, and paid nothing.

The English nobles and common people endured all this for many years. They feared John very much. They remembered that since the Norman Conquest no rebel barons had ever conquered the king. They thought that if they rose in revolt and were defeated John would take a fearful vengeance, and things would be worse than before. But when John quarrelled with Pope Innocent, and was beaten, the barons began to think it possible to win a victory for themselves.

The Pope lived in Rome. He was the chief ruler of all clergymen. People in John's time, just as now, endeavoured to lead good lives. It was the work of the Church to show them how to do this, and to punish them if necessary. There were several ways by which the Popes could compel kings and subjects to do their will. One of these was the "Interdict." When Philip King of France, the man who took away John's lands, ill-treated his wife, Pope Innocent published an Interdict in France. That means that he commanded all church doors to be shut, and all public worship of God to cease. No bells rang to call Frenchmen to church ; no one could enter churches to pray ; no service of Holy Communion was held ; no priest would hear confessions of sins or grant God's pardon to penitent sinners. No dead could be buried in the consecrated ground of the churchyard. They were buried anywhere like dead dogs, and no prayers were said at their funerals. All Frenchmen were terrified. For they thought God would not listen to prayers in a country

where an Interdict had been published. So at last King Philip had to give in, and promise to behave better to his wife in future. Then at once church doors were opened again, bells called people to service, and psalms and prayers were heard again in the churches.

There was another very terrible power which the Popes could use. It was called "Excommunication." If a man were excommunicated by a Pope, he was not allowed to enter any church. Men who spoke to him were liable to be excommunicated also. If he died without being freed from excommunication he was supposed to go straight to hell. An Interdict and Excommunication were very terrible powers. But they were needed in the old days when men were very fierce and brutal.

In 1205, John quarrelled with Pope Innocent III. This Pope was very eager to make the world better. So when John wished his friend John Grey to be Archbishop of Canterbury, the Pope appointed instead a good man called Stephen Langton. John was furious, and refused to let Langton come to England. Then Innocent put England under an Interdict. John in revenge seized the lands of priests and monks, and all their revenues. When his vile friends ill-treated and murdered priests, he would not let them be punished. At last, in 1209, Innocent excommunicated John, and in 1213 ordered Philip to invade England and depose him.

Then John's courage failed. He knew his barons hated him, and he feared to lose England as he had lost Normandy, Anjou, and Maine. He accepted Langton for Archbishop, and promised to pay compensation for all the harm he had done to clergymen and monks. He had begun to fear his angry barons also. They were talking of resisting him. So he decided to turn Pope

Innocent into a protector. He gave up his kingdom to him. The Pope then gave it back to be ruled by John as a vassal. Any one who attacked John after that would be excommunicated. Langton then came to England. At Winchester he met the king. John appeared before the door of the cathedral, and, after a religious service, he was pardoned and his excommunication was removed. Then Langton kissed him in sign of friendship, and allowed him to enter the cathedral to worship. A big dinner party ended the happy day. But the Interdict was not removed until a year later, when John had paid a large sum of money to compensate the clergy for all the damage he had done to their estates and for all the money he had taken. In July, 1214, after a silence of six and a half years, the church doors were once more opened, and bells began to ring for services.

But the barons by this time had made up their minds to demand reforms. The Archbishop had promised to support them. Far away in Rome the Pope did not understand how bad a king John was. Letters came from him forbidding the barons to make conspiracies against the king, and ordering them to obey him. But, nevertheless, they gathered their armed knights around them, and sent their demands to John. They complained about all the misdeeds which have been mentioned earlier in this chapter, and asked him to give up his cruel ways. Then he broke out into awful oaths, and said he would never make himself a slave to his barons. "They might as well ask for my kingdom at once," he cried.

Undismayed the rebels marched to London, and entered it one Sunday when most citizens were at church. When sermon-time was over, however, it was quite clear that the Londoners were ready to help the barons against

the king. By this time John had fled to Windsor. His servants were attacked in various parts of the country ; his sheriffs found that they could collect no taxes ; his friends became frightened, and sneaked away to join the barons. At last in despair the king gave way, and on June 17, 1215, met the barons at Runnymede. There they handed him a great roll of parchment with their demands written on it in Latin. In future John was not to ask for costly reliefs. He was to be satisfied with £100 from a baron's heir and 100 shillings from a knight's. He was not to waste the estates of heirs who were under full age. Ladies were not to be married to unsuitable men. In future no aid or scutage was to be demanded from the military tenants until they had met in a Great Council, and given their consent. Permission, however, was given to the king to take aids without permission of this Great Council when he needed money to knight his oldest son, or marry his eldest daughter, or to ransom himself from captivity.

All foreigners were to be sent out of England, and the king was in future to choose his judges and officers from Englishmen who knew the law of the kingdom and would keep it. No free man was to be punished except after a trial, and no punishment was to be too severe. Men were not to be fined so heavily as to be turned into beggars. A freeman was not to be deprived of his lands, or a villein of his plough and oxen, or a merchant of his goods. The king was not to order men to repair bridges unless it was their duty to do so. And no corn or other food was to be taken without payment. No carts or horses were to be seized without the owner's permission.

The document in which all these demands were mentioned is called *Magna Carta* or the Great Charter. To show that he consented to the barons' wishes, John ordered it to

be sealed with his royal seal. There was a strip of tape hanging from the lower edge of the parchment. On to this the man, who looked after the royal sealing-wax, poured hot wax, and then the Chancellor, who always kept the great seal, stamped the wax with it, while it was still hot. For when few people could write, this was the way in which kings gave their consent.

Every Englishman, who is able, should go and look at a copy of the Magna Carta. The barons insisted that



(Half the diameter of the Original.)

FIG. 57.—The two sides of King John's Seal.

The Latin inscriptions in English read thus: "John by the Grace of God King of England, Lord of Ireland," and "John Duke of Normandy and Aquitaine, Count of Anjou." The Seal had two sides because the sealing wax on the tape was stamped on both sides. The figures show King John on his throne and on horseback.

John should seal many copies, which they distributed throughout the land, so that as many men as possible might know the contents. Four of these copies still exist after seven hundred years. Perhaps other copies may still be found. Two of the existing copies are in the British Museum. One still has John's seal of yellow wax attached, but a fire, which broke out in a library in 1731, has caused the wax to melt a little and made it impossible

to read some of the writing. The other British Museum copy has lost the seal, but otherwise is undamaged. You can buy a reproduction of this one for half a crown at the Museum.

John never meant to keep his promises. He appealed to the Pope. Innocent condemned the Charter as "vile, base, and unlawful," and excommunicated the barons. Then war began. John was winning successes, when, happily, he died in October, 1216.

CHAPTER XIX.—THE FIRST ATTEMPT TO SET UP PARLIAMENTARY GOVERNMENT *

KING JOHN was compelled by barons and bishops to make promises that he would govern better in the future. If he broke his word, twenty-five barons had his permission to make war against him. But making war is expensive and difficult. So every one, soon after 1216, began to look for another way of compelling a king to govern well. They began to think a great deal about ways of government. This happened in the reign of John's son, Henry III.

Henry, at his father's death, was nine years old. At first the Government was managed by regents; but when the king became a man he began to govern by himself, and soon England discovered that, although Henry was not a bad man like his father, his government was bad. To the disgust of all Englishmen he delighted in the company of foreigners. He seemed to think his English subjects were boors and traitors, and that gentlemen and true servants could only be found abroad. In 1236 he married a lady from Provence, in the south of France. She had four greedy uncles and many other friends, who came in large numbers to England, and were received with joy by Henry. He gave them so much land, so much money, and so many well-paid offices

* See P. P. Hists., Sen. Bk. I., Part III., Chap. IV.

that men said England was like a vineyard with a broken down fence, which allowed all comers to enter in and pluck the grapes. One of the Queen's uncles, Boniface of Savoy, was made Archbishop of Canterbury. Boniface's manners were not as good as an archbishop's should have been. Without being invited he used to take possession of other bishops' houses, and live in them. Then he and his servants wasted the food and drink which the bishops had stored up for their own use. If it was necessary to buy food, Boniface's steward used to bully the merchants of the markets with blows and threats, and compel them to sell their goods at very low prices. On one occasion Boniface himself, with a crowd of ill-mannered servants, entered the church of the monastery of Saint Bartholomew the Great, just outside the walls of London. When he was told that he had no right there, he struck an old monk with his fist, and shouted to his servants, "This is the way to treat these English traitors." Then he began to swear and to call for his sword, as though he meant to kill. He seized the old man again, and thrust him back against the woodwork of the choir seats with such violence that he had to be carried to the infirmary, and was an invalid for the rest of his days. The servants, many of whom were Frenchmen, attacked the other holy men, knocked them down, wounded them, and trampled them underfoot, so that the place was covered with blood.

The Londoners, when they heard of it, and saw the bloodstained victims going through the streets to ask for the king's protection against his wife's uncle, cursed Boniface and all his men with loud shouts. They actually proposed to cut him in pieces. When the monks reached Henry's palace, they found the door of his room shut.

Although they waited long, he refused to see them or listen to their complaints. They and their friends gave up all hope of help from man, and prayed to God that He would punish their enemy.

Henry had also some foreign half-brothers. After his father, John, had died, his mother, Queen Isabella, had married a French lord. When her sons grew up, Henry welcomed them to England, and treated them well. But their manners were even worse than those of Boniface. One of them, called William, while out hunting, entered a country house at Hatfield, which belonged to the Bishop of Ely. Because he was thirsty, and could find at first no drink but beer, he broke open the doors of the cellar. He cursed the beer and all who first made it, and ordered the corks to be drawn from all the casks, so that the drink was wasted. Then he helped himself and all his servants to the bishop's choicest wine, and spilled it wastefully on the cellar floor. After drinking their fill he and they departed, leaving wine and beer to flow everywhere, for they took no care to restore the corks.

Another brother of the king, Guy by name, when out travelling, demanded lodgings for himself, his men, and their horses in the abbey of St. Albans. When his servants found some horses belonging to other guests in the abbey stable, they turned them all out, although there was room and to spare for the guests' horses and their own.

Englishmen stormed and raged against all foreigners. But they knew not what to do. To go to war was unpleasant. They remembered how King John had nearly beaten them. Every man began to ask whether there was not some other way of compelling a king to keep good order.

The nation was angry about other things as well. Henry regarded himself as the Pope's vassal, and thought he ought to do whatever the Pope or his officials ordered. Pope Innocent III. had long been dead, but the new Pope regarded England as part of his property. He was fighting at this time to drive his enemies out of Southern Italy and Sicily ; he thought that he had a right to as much English money as he needed. He sent his agents, called legates, to collect it, and Henry did not dare to resist. In 1237 one of these legates, Cardinal Otto, arrived. Henry received him when he landed, and humbly bowed before him. Londoners were more independent, and were so hostile that the legate had to beg a guard of soldiers from the king. When he went to Oxford University to collect money, a quarrel broke out between his men and the students. Students in those days were all clergymen, and thought that they had a right to pay a visit to the Pope's legate. So they knocked at the door of Osney Abbey, where he was staying, and politely begged admission. They expected gentlemanly treatment. But the doorkeeper was a foreigner, and rudely shouted out, "What do you want ?" When they made polite answer, he insulted them. Then they angrily rushed in through the half-open door, although the doorkeeper and some Italian servants of the legate did their best with fists and sticks to keep them back. In the middle of the uproar the legate's cook, who was also the legate's brother, threw some hot water in the face of a starving Irishman who begged for food. This stirred up the rage of a student from the Welsh border, who shot the cook with an arrow. Then the legate in fear fled in his robes to the church tower, and bolted the door. When he had taken his robes off he mounted his best horse in the darkness, and fled by

secret fords across the River Thames. The angry students did not cease to search everywhere for him, while he rode with all speed to the king at Abingdon, and explained with tears and sobs what had happened to him. All the trouble had arisen from the bad manners of the foreigners. But Henry, in a rage, made prisoners of some of the students, sent them in carts to London, and delivered them to prison.

But Otto remained four years in England. Henry treated him with great honour, and gave him the royal seat at banquets. But the bishops and abbots did not love him. He took from them enormous sums of money, and much silver plate, before he went away in 1241. Henry said to his people when they complained, “I dare not resist the Pope in anything.”

The Pope ill-treated England in other ways. He used to send letters to English bishops ordering them to give rectories and livings to Italian priests, so that his friends might have plenty of money. The foreigners never came to England to do their work in the village churches ; they stayed at home and sent agents to collect their money, tithes, burial fees, marriage fees, and so forth. Sometimes the villagers, who were angry that they had to pay tithe and yet had no priest, attacked and burned the barns where the agents had gathered the corn and other produce. Barns like these were called tithe-barns. Henry himself gave rectories to foreigners. He gave the rectory of Preston to the chaplain of that Guy who had behaved so badly at the abbey of St. Albans. A monk of the abbey, who wrote a history of the time, says he had seen that chaplain behaving like a buffoon. “I have seen,” he writes, “that chaplain, who was a foreigner and ignorant of manners and learning, stoning the king and his brother

Guy, as they were walking in the orchard of St. Albans, with sods, stones, and green apples, and squirting the juice of unripe grapes into their eyes, as though he had lost his reason. He was more fit for an actor than a priest." The chronicler, of course, means that the chaplain did this in fun.

At last, in 1254, Henry did a very foolish thing. In that year the Pope, thinking Henry to be a simpleton, offered to make the king's second son, Edmund, King of Southern Italy and Sicily, if in return Henry would send him money for his war. Henry, like a fool, joyfully agreed, although he was deep in debt. He at once began to call Edmund King of Sicily. He borrowed money from Italian moneylenders and sent it to the Pope, telling him that he could have as much as he needed. Of course the Pope spent this money lavishly, and Henry's debts increased, till at last, in 1257, he was compelled to call his barons together in a great Council or Parliament and ask for help. He brought Edmund in Italian dress before them. The chronicler says that when they heard what he had done, and that he owed £90,000, their ears tingled, and their hearts beat quickly with astonishment. It was time, they thought, to put an end to Henry's government. Next year Henry called the council together again at Oxford, but the barons came in arms, and told the king that they would pay nothing, unless he chose good ministers and governed by their advice.

This plan of the barons is that which our Parliament follows to-day. Parliament has taken the place of the Great Council, and no taxation can be imposed on the people of England without its consent. So it says to the king, "If you appoint ministers whom we can trust, we shall give you money. But if your ministers do not

suit us, we shall give you none." The king cannot govern without ministers. He cannot attend to all the needs of the army and navy and post office and other things himself. So in order that the business of government may be properly done, he has to appoint helpers, called ministers, to do it. But these men can only be supplied with money if Parliament likes the way they do their work. So in all they do they have to please Parliament. We call this kind of government, in which Parliament has to be pleased, a Parliamentary Government, and we say the monarch's power is limited. It was something like this which the Great Council of barons was trying to establish in Henry's time.

Henry resisted its wishes. No king had ever been treated in this way. John had been compelled to promise good government ; but he had never been told to choose ministers that his Great Council liked, and to do nothing without their permission. If Henry had submitted, he would have become like our king to-day. He would always have been compelled to do his ministers' bidding. To his mind this was slavery. Of course, it was a new idea, and we should not be surprised because he resisted. His foreign friends were horrified that subjects should give orders to a king. But the king yielded, for by this time he feared the barons. They gave him a council of fifteen, by whose advice he was to govern. So England in 1258 became a limited monarchy for a while. But the royal power was limited by barons, and not by a Parliament of lords and commons as it is to-day.

The leader of the barons was Simon de Montfort, Earl of Leicester. With this man at their head, the barons decided to make an end of foreigners. They

called on them to hand over their castles. William, the king's half-brother, who had so wasted the Bishop of Ely's beer and wine, blustered a good deal, and refused. Simon answered, "You must either surrender your castles or lose your head." Then fear came upon the foreigners, and they fled in haste from Oxford ; and as they fled they spurred their horses' flanks, and often looked behind to see if they were pursued. However, they got safely away.

But at this point quarrels arose among the barons. Some were selfish, and wished to keep all power for themselves. But Simon de Montfort and others thought that they should remember the knights and the people of the towns, for these paid taxes as well as the barons. Simon and his friends wished to summon knights and citizens to the Great Council as well as archbishops, bishops, abbots, and barons, so that they might have some opportunity of saying how much they wished to give, and what kind of government they wanted. But the selfish barons disliked this ; they thought it a scandalous thing that common people should be allowed to talk about important matters. If attempts to limit the king's power were going to lead to this sort of thing, they preferred to join the king's side.

Soon war began between Simon and his friends on one side and King Henry and the selfish barons on the other. At first Simon won a victory at Lewes in Sussex in 1264. Next year he called a Parliament together. To London he summoned the Archbishop of York, several bishops and abbots and some friendly barons. But he called two knights from each shire and two citizens from each city that he thought important. So there met a Parliament which was something like our Parliament to-day. But all the members sat

together, and not in separate houses as they do in our time.

But in the end all Simon's plans came to nought. He was slain in the battle of Evesham in 1265, and Henry became a free king again.

CHAPTER XX.—EDWARD I. AND PARLIAMENT

HENRY III. died in 1272, and was succeeded by his son Edward. This man saw that his father had ruled England in such a way as to benefit foreigners and harm his own people. He determined that in future England should be governed for the benefit of Englishmen. In this way he knew that he would never be called upon to obey the commands of ministers chosen for him by his barons. All his life he lived on good terms with his subjects. Of course quarrels occurred between king and people occasionally, but each side respected the other. For Edward did not do silly things like his father; and when he made a promise he tried to keep it. His motto was “*Pactum Serva*,” which means “Keep a Promise.”

His subjects observed that their king was not lazy nor wasteful, but business-like, and a careful keeper of accounts; that he did not fill his head with wild hopes of conquering lands on the continent; that he had no love for foreigners, but a great deal for his wife; that he did not fear the Pope; and that he watched his officials, and punished even the greatest of them when they used their powers to fill their pockets at the expense of poor people. They admitted also that everything he did was designed for the good of England. For these

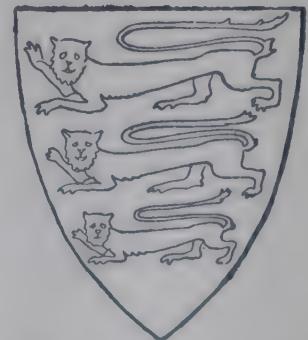


FIG. 58.—Coat of Arms of Edward I.

reasons they endured his heavy taxation and occasional outbursts of dreadful temper, and never told him that he must carry out orders given to him by ministers, whom Parliament had chosen.

A businesslike watchful king is a great blessing. Edward was like a good doctor ; he could see where the State was sick, and knew what cures to apply. He forbade his servants to break Magna Carta by seizing villagers' carts, oxen, and corn without payment ; he forbade unjust fines ; he ordered his officials to give receipts for money paid, so that they might not be able to demand a second payment from people who could not resist. Royal servants were ordered to do the work, which the king paid them to do, without demanding fees or presents from people who needed their services.

Edward watched his barons carefully. Not one of them was allowed to settle his disputes with his neighbours by force, or to seize lands which belonged to the king, or to plunder royal estates, or to help prisoners to escape from the king's gaols. Some barons were trying cases in their courts which they had no right to try, and were pocketing the fees. Some had seized by force ferries which belonged to other people, and were taking all the fees paid by those who were ferried across. Some pretended that the sheriffs could not enter their estates to seize criminals. Some had taken possession of royal forests.

Into all these matters Edward carefully inquired, and even the greatest in the land were compelled to give up what they had no right to. Englishmen felt that this busy king was doing a king's work in a business-like way.

Edward compelled common folk to do their duty too. Every man had to help in keeping order. He had

to inform the sheriff about criminals, if he knew of any, and chase them hot-foot through the countryside. He had to help in clearing away the brushwood that bordered the roads, and afforded lurking cover, whence highwaymen spied out the coming of victims. Every man according to the king's orders had to have proper armour. Twice a year he had to put it all on, and stand with his friends before the sheriff, so that the king might be satisfied that his people were ready to fight in time of danger.

In Edward's reign we hear a great deal about Parliament. The king found it necessary constantly to ask for money. He was often at war with Wales and Scotland, for he fought hard to join England, Scotland, and Wales into one kingdom. But the Scots and Welsh disliked having an Englishman to rule over them, and stirred up the French king to help them. The French king's name was Philip; he was very pleased indeed to attack Edward when he was in trouble, for he wished to take from the English the lands which they held in Southern France. All these wars cost money. In order that he might get it more easily, Edward formed a Parliament like Simon de Montfort's.

He sent letters, called writs, to the sheriffs, ordering them to hold elections in county courts and in towns. In each county court two men, called knights, were to be elected to go to Parliament at Westminster, or wherever else Parliament met. For Parliament in those days did not always meet in Westminster, but just where the king thought most convenient for himself. And towns were to elect two citizens to represent them also. Elections nowadays are carried out in polling stations, where electors make crosses on cards against the names of the candidates they like. In Edward's day the people

in the county court, or in the town meeting, voted probably by shouting or holding up their hands.

Knights and citizens in those far-off days were not eager to go to Parliament. The roads were bad, and thieves were very plentiful, and there was no building so comfortable as our Houses of Parliament to sit in. So the sheriff very often had difficulty in finding knights and citizens who were willing to go. When he had found two knights he probably asked the men in the county court whether they were satisfied with them, and they probably shouted back that they were. It was probably the same in the towns. Often men were elected against their will, and other men had to be chosen to see that they actually went to Parliament. After the representatives had been chosen the sheriff put their names on parchment, sewed the parchment to the writ, and sent both to the king.

In those days members of Parliament had their expenses paid by the counties and towns. This often made the towns beg to be excused from sending citizens to represent them.

The knights of the counties and the citizens sat in Parliament in the same hall with the barons and bishops. When the king asked them for money, they usually gave him permission to collect from each landowner of the county one-fifteenth of the value of his cattle and crops, and from each townsman one-tenth of the value of the goods in his shop or warehouse. When every one paid fairly the king got about £39,000.

But still Edward had not always enough money to do all that he wished for England, so he adopted another way of taxing people. Many merchants in England exported wool to the continent, where it was made into cloth. By this trade they became so wealthy that

Edward thought they could afford to give him some of their money.

England was famous for her sheep in Edward's day. You must not think they were as big as our sheep ; they weighed less than forty pounds. Our sheep often weigh over a hundred pounds. They carried a fleece of wool weighing about one pound eight ounces. Our sheep have fleeces of seven or eight pounds weight, and sometimes more. But people who lived on the continent in Edward's time thought English sheep were the best in the world, and sought eagerly after their wool because it was very tough in fibre. Almost all the cloth in Western Europe was made from English wool by the Flemings, who lived in the country we call Belgium. Great and prosperous cities grew up there. Their inhabitants were skilful spinners of woollen thread and weavers of cloth. Their agents came over to England to buy all the wool they could find, and Englishmen were glad to sell, for they did not manufacture much cloth in those days ; they bought the cloth they needed from the Flemings.

Because wool was valuable, everybody kept as many sheep as possible. People wrote books telling the best way to manage them. One writer, called Walter de Henley, who wrote in Henry the Third's time, says that in winter they should be fed on coarse hay mixed with the straw of wheat or oats, and that they should not be allowed to drink stagnant water. He writes that it is a sign of a sheep's good health if the wool cannot be easily torn from its sides. In the thirteenth century a new disease appeared among sheep. The name for it is "scab." It was found that to preserve the wool it was good to rub tar on the sore place. So large quantities of tar began to be imported from Norway and every shepherd carried a pot of it about with him.

The county of Norfolk became wealthy through keeping sheep. Its wolds gave good pasture. The monks, who had built famous abbeys in the deserted valleys of Yorkshire, owned huge flocks, which fed on the Yorkshire dales and hills. The islands which dot the coast of Essex had thousands and thousands of sheep as early as the time of William the Conqueror. Shearing time came round in the early summer. Then the wool was made up into huge sacks, put on shipboard and carried over to the Flemings.

In 1297, when Edward needed a great deal of money to fight against Scots, Welsh, and Irish, he suddenly seized all the wool in the kingdom, and said it would not be returned to the owners until they had paid a tax of forty shillings for each sack. Then he went away to fight in France. The barons and citizens of London protested against this way of raising money, and Edward had to promise that he would not put a tax on sacks of wool again without the consent of Parliament.

So by Edward the First's time Parliament was becoming powerful in money matters. The king could not collect tenths and fifteenths nor a tax on wool without its permission. The members of Parliament soon discovered that kings would give them all kinds of favours in return for money.

CHAPTER XXI.—THE SCOTTISH WAR IN THE REIGNS OF EDWARD I. AND EDWARD II.*

SCOTLAND and England to-day are united under the same king and Parliament. They have had the same king since 1603 and the same Parliament since 1707. In Edinburgh there is a building still called Parliament House, but no Parliaments have met there for over two hundred years.

Many English kings before 1603 thought of uniting England and Scotland. They were led to think of this because when they were sending soldiers away by the front door to attack France, the Scots began to attack their back door by sending armies across the border to plunder. This happened in the reign of Edward I., and made him eager to join the two kingdoms together.

No one who lived in Edward's time has taken the trouble to tell us what Scotland looked like then. But we know its appearance pretty well. Of course the hills and rivers were there, and we may be certain Scottish mists were as wet then as now. The northern parts called the Highlands were very wild. In places there were, as there are now, great stretches of peaty moorland, covered in the autumn with purple heather. Elsewhere craggy mountains rose to the sky ; their tops were stony and bare, and often covered with mist, but their lower slopes gave grazing ground for herds of deer. Eagles nested on pinnacles of rock.

* See P. P. Hists., Jun. Bk. III., Robert Bruce.

Dense pine forests covered the soil in some districts ; and there the deer took shelter when snow covered the mountains, and bitter winds blew. Wolves and wild

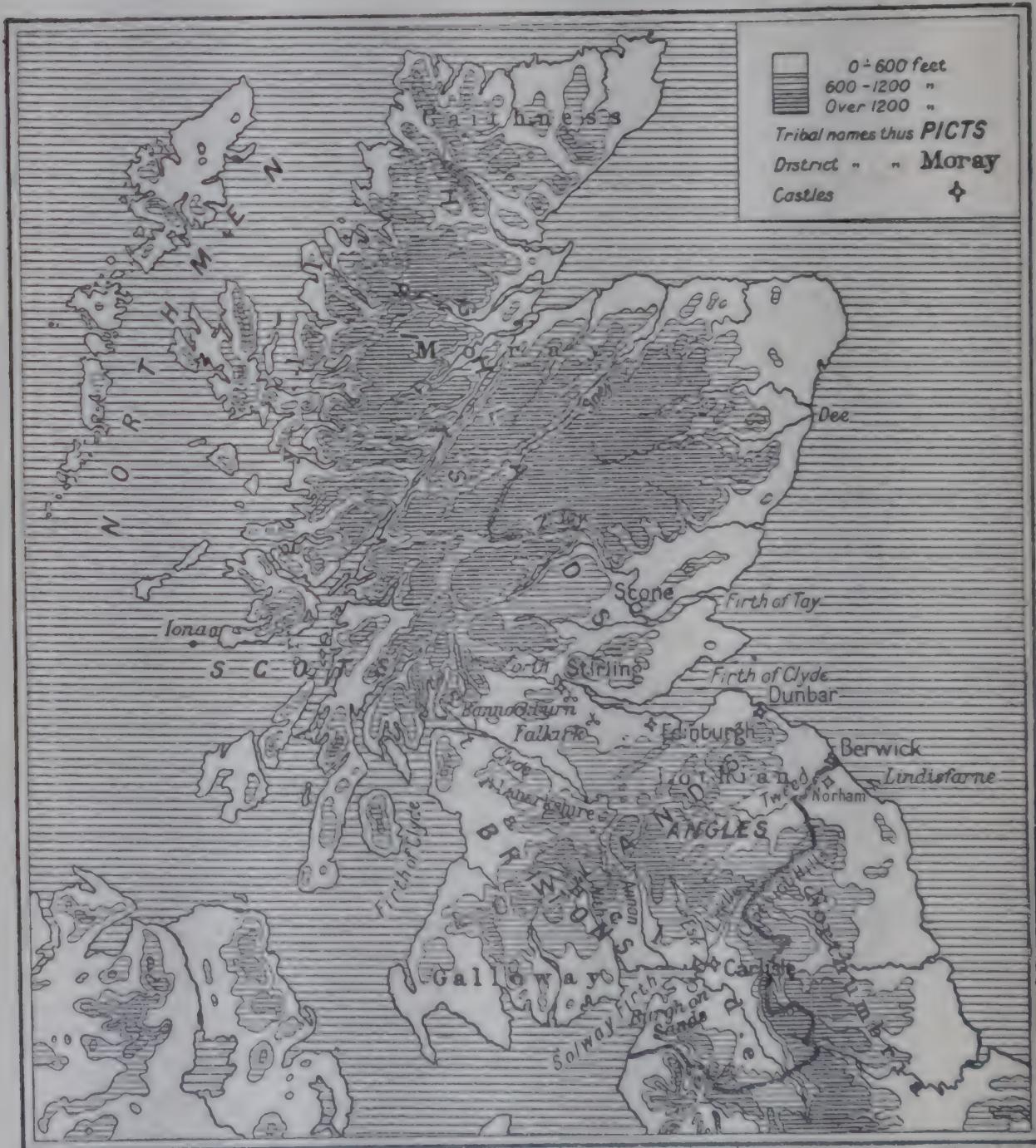


FIG. 59.—Scotland and Northern England.

boars were common. The southern part, called the Lowlands, was the pleasantest. The hills were not so high and stony ; their sides were smoother and covered with grass, which gave good feeding for sheep and cattle.

The country was not so pretty to look at then as it is now, for not so much ground was cultivated, neither were there hedges of thorn or grey stone walls dividing fields from one another. Thick forest covered the soil in many places. Wild boar and deer found cover in it, and up the valleys flew long-legged herons watching for fish in the water below, and keeping a bright look out for savage hawks in the air above.

The people were wild. They belonged to many different races. In the north, in the mountainous country which we call the Highlands, there were the descendants of the Picts, those old enemies of the Roman soldiers, who had kept the wall. In the west, near the mouth of the River Clyde, were the descendants of the Scots, who originally came from Ireland, and were to give their name to their new country. In the south-eastern parts, in the country called Lothian, which lies south of the Firth of Forth and stretches to the Cheviot Hills, lived the descendants of the Angles, who once formed part of the kingdom of Northumbria. In the south-west, in the country called Strathclyde, there lived another race, a remnant of the ancient Britons. These races spoke different languages. In the ninth century the Northmen came to Scotland just as they had come to England. They seized the western islands and conquered a great part of the north too, so that people and places there still have Norwegian names.

In course of time the kings who ruled the Scots also became kings of the Picts, and of the Strathclyde Britons, and of the Angles in Lothian, and of the Northmen; and so the whole country has come to be known as Scotland, and all its people as Scots. But although all these races had one king, they did not love one another. Many of them wore kilts and a rough kind of mantle

called a plaid; many went about barelegged and barefooted, and other nations thought them nothing better than savages. At last a king called David, who reigned from 1124 to 1153, thought it would be nicer to have gentlemanly Normans about him, and persuaded many of them to come to Scotland from England, and gave

them large estates. As they kept their English estates as well, they owed obedience both to an English king and to a Scottish king. The other people hated them, and when war broke out with England, as it often did, they accused the Normans of not fighting as well as they should have done against their friends in the English ranks, and against their other landlord, the King of England. The Normans despised the Scots because of their bare legs, because they fought on foot, because their shields were only made of wood and hard leather, and because they had few steel helmets, no shirts of steel



FIG. 60.—Highland Costume in the Thirteenth Century.

As shown on a thirteenth-century monument.)

links, nor gloves, nor leggings of steel. The Normans fought on horseback, and were clad in steel from head to foot. But the Scots answered with sneers, saying that no man could fight well when so heavily laden. Nevertheless, the Scottish kings trusted most to their Norman barons.

In 1286 King Alexander III. of Scotland died. He

left no son behind him, so his granddaughter, Margaret of Norway, daughter of King Eric of Norway, was his heiress. Because she was only three years old she was known as "The Maid." Edward at once formed the hopeful plan of uniting the English and Scottish kingdoms by a marriage between the Maid and his son Edward, Prince of Wales, who was of the same age. In 1290 his plan was accepted by the Scots, and a ship was sent to Norway to bring the Maid to England. For the little girl, who was to become his daughter-in-law, Edward put on board a store of dainties, such as ginger, figs, raisins, gingerbread, walnuts, and sugar. But the Maid can have eaten few of them, for she became very ill at sea, and was put ashore in the Orkneys only to die. So Edward's plan of joining the kingdoms by a marriage had to be given up.

Immediately there arose a host of men pretending that they belonged to the Scottish Royal Family and were the next heirs to the throne. Edward claimed to be overlord of Scotland, and would have marched north at once to keep order, but his beloved wife Eleanor died in November, 1290, and his expedition had to be postponed. "I loved her dearly in her lifetime," he wrote. "I shall not cease to love her now that she is dead." He conveyed her body from Lincolnshire, where she died, to its last resting-place in Westminster Abbey, and wherever the coffin rested at the end of each day's journey there he caused to be erected a beautiful cross. You can see the one at Waltham in the picture.

Next year, however, the claimants in Scotland begged him to decide which of them should be king. He agreed to do so, and sent orders for them to meet him at Norham in Northumberland to discuss the matter. On arriving there he first demanded that the Scottish barons should

admit him to be feudal overlord of the Scottish kings, and of their nobles. He thought that if once he had the right to give orders to the kings of Scotland, he would not run such a risk of being attacked by Scottish armies

when he was at war with France. If he was so attacked, he would have the right to depose the king, for no feudal dependent or vassal, who fought against his lord, was allowed to keep his lands.

After begging time in which to think the matter over, the Scots agreed to accept Edward as their lord. Then Edward proceeded to choose a king for Scotland. Out of all the many claimants there were three important ones, John Balliol, Robert Bruce, and John Hastings. They were all descended from that King David who had reigned in Scotland between 1124 and 1153, and who had brought so many Normans

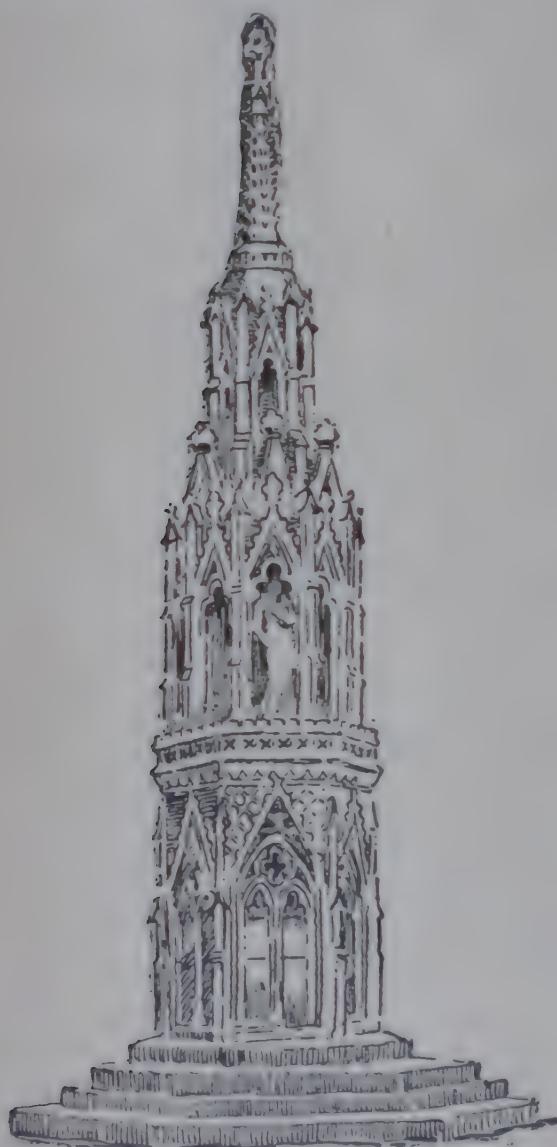


FIG. 61.—Eleanor's Cross at Waltham.

into the country. At last, in 1292, Edward chose John Balliol to be king. John had a great many estates in Northamptonshire, Hertfordshire, and Northumberland, and so was a baron of England. Perhaps Edward thought his new feudal underking would never rebel for fear of losing his English lands. On November 30, 1292, John was crowned at Scone in Perthshire, sitting on the

coronation stone which was supposed once to have been Jacob's pillow at Bethel. A few days later he knelt before Edward, and promised to be his faithful man.

The Scots soon found that Edward intended to be their master. He issued orders to King John, and treated him as though he were an English subject. So in 1295 John joined with France against England, and got ready for war. But Edward's army marched into Scotland, and was too strong for John. He was everywhere defeated. In twenty-one weeks Edward conquered Scotland. John gave up the crown, and Edward made himself king of the country. Probably he had been hoping all the time that John would rebel and enable him to take the crown for himself.

It is easy to see why John was so quickly defeated: he could not get a large enough army to face the English, for the Highlanders, the inhabitants of the mountainous lands or highlands of the north, hated the Lowlanders, who lived in the lower lands of the south, and would not willingly obey a Lowland king. They hated John Balliol for another reason: he had much Norman blood in him. So the Highlanders would not help him. John Bruce, son of the Bruce who had claimed the throne, would not help the man who had won it. And many Scottish nobles who had lands in England would not take sides with John Balliol against Edward for fear of losing them. And as for the common people of the south, they merely looked on to see what would happen. So Edward could do what he liked. In 1296, after setting up English priests and English sheriffs to rule the land, he went back to England, taking Jacob's pillow with him. From that day to this it has lain in Westminster Abbey in the base of the coronation chair.

By carrying it into England Edward hoped to show that Scotland would never see a king crowned at Scone again.

But next year part of Scotland rose in rebellion under William Wallace. Nothing is known of this man's early

life. He seems to have been owner of a small estate in Lanarkshire. Under him the common people of Scotland began to fight for their liberty ; they had begun to hate the English sheriffs, whom Edward appointed to rule them and tax them and judge them. These officers behaved with great cruelty. The English priests were unpopular too. So the common folk began to fight. At first they had no great nobles to help them, and so had very few soldiers on horseback. But Wallace knew how to make the best of foot-soldiers. He was a man of enormous strength, and the common folk of Scotland

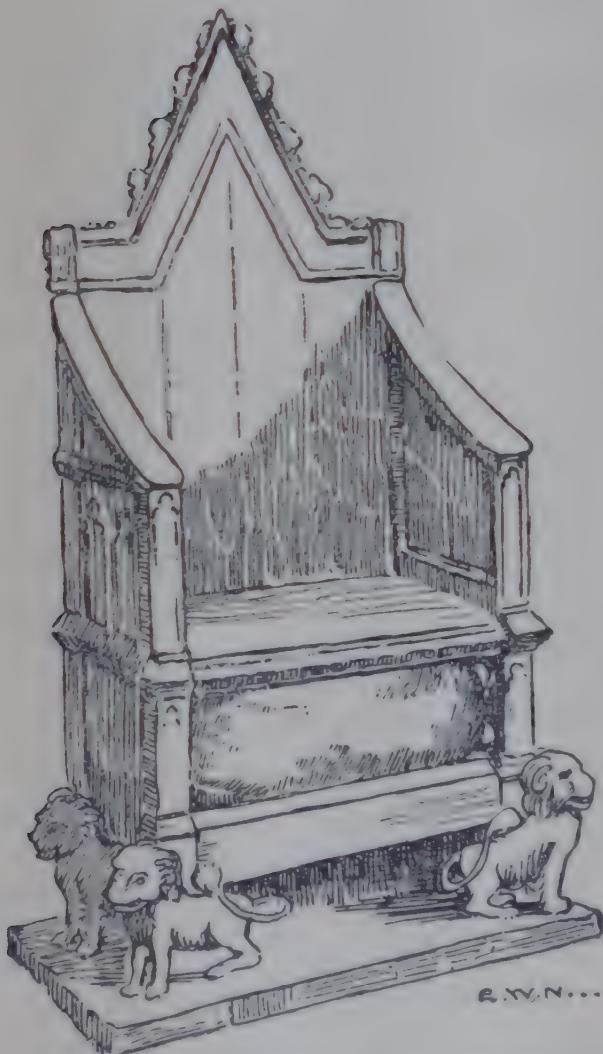


FIG. 62.—Coronation Chair and Stone.

to this day regard him as their special hero, because, in the time when they had no king, and when most of their nobles were friendly with the English, he came forward to lead them against their enemies. On the high rock called the Abbey Crag outside Stirling they have built a tower called the Wallace Monument, and on the side of it is a statue of the hero himself, holding aloft his

great sword and looking over a battlefield on which he defeated the English.

This defeat occurred in September, 1297. Wallace and his footsoldiers were stationed on the Abbey Crag watching the English in the town of Stirling across the River Forth. The river was crossed by a narrow bridge. The foolish Englishmen whom Edward had left in command ordered their horsemen to cross the bridge and attack Wallace. When half of them were over the Scottish footsoldiers, with spears in their hands, rushed down from the crag and slew every man who could not swim back to safety. Then the English commander took his horse, and fled so fast to Berwick, that when he arrived his horse was unable to eat, and died. This was a great victory won by footsoldiers against mounted men.

But next year, 1298, King Edward came north himself with an army at his back. Near Falkirk he found Wallace and his soldiers, armed with spears, standing in four battalions with their spears pointing outwards. The English horsemen galloped straight at them, expecting to overthrow them easily ; but the Scots stood firm. It was a wonderful sight, and surprised many an English knight, who thought no footsoldiers could stand against him and his horse. But Edward saw what to do. He had in his army a number of very fine archers armed with long-bows. These bows were five feet or more long, and were called long-bows to distinguish them from the shorter bows which hitherto had been used. The men who had short bows only drew the cord to their chests, but men who had long bows drew the cord past their right ear, so that the arrows flew much further than the arrows from the short bow. It was the men of South Wales who invented the long bow. Englishmen quickly saw what a splendid weapon it was. It could drive an

arrow point through an oak door four inches thick, and through a knight's iron breastplate, and send an arrow well over 200 yards. Soon every English village had its archery butts where archers could practise.

The first important battle at which the long-bow was used was at Falkirk. Edward called up his archers and bade them shoot into the Scottish battalions. Wallace's men began to fall in hundreds, and then Edward ordered his horsemen to charge the broken lines. This time the Scots were swept to destruction. Englishmen learned a valuable lesson that day, which their best leaders never forgot. They saw that footmen with spears could resist armour-plated men on horseback. They saw also that a force of Scottish archers might have saved the Scottish spearmen by shooting down the English archers. So in future English armies always had many spearmen ready to resist the charges of horsemen, and many archers ready to protect the spearmen.

For seven years more Wallace led a wandering life. Scottish nobles would not help him, for he was only a small landowner, and they were jealous of him. Moreover, they still feared to resist Edward lest they should lose their English lands. At last in 1305 Wallace was betrayed by Menteith, a Scottish noble who favoured Edward. Wallace and Menteith were eating together. The latter's soldiers were present and had received orders to seize Wallace when their master turned the loaf of bread upside down. The trick was successful, and Wallace was captured. "To turn the loaf" is, in the Scottish tongue, "To whummle the bannock." Scottish people say that for centuries afterwards it was a deadly insult to whummle the bannock in the presence of a Menteith. This shows that the family was afterwards ashamed of its treachery. Wallace was executed in London.

If Edward now hoped for peace he was disappointed. The very winter after Wallace died another hero appeared. At Edward's court there was living a Scottish noble, Robert Bruce, grandson of the Bruce who had competed with John Balliol for the throne in 1292. One snowy night he fled from London, having, as the story goes, first shod his horse backwards to throw pursuers off the scent. Soon he was crowned king at Scone. But in his first battle he was defeated, and for many a long year he wandered almost homeless among the western islands and on the misty hills of Scotland. In 1307 Edward marched against him with a great army, but died at Burgh-on-Sands within sight of Scotland. His son Edward II. soon gave up the campaign. Then Bruce began to be successful. More men joined him; he captured many castles. At last, in 1314, Edward II. bestirred himself to march north with 60,000 men and put an end to the Scottish revolt. At Bannockburn, near Stirling, he found Bruce waiting for him with 25,000 men drawn up in battalions with spear-points outwards. Edward II. was a poor general. He first of all sent forward his archers to shoot down the spearmen. This was the correct thing to do; for if once many spearmen were slain the English knights could charge the rest. But he allowed Bruce to send his cavalry against the archers and destroy them before they had shot down many Scottish spearmen. Then he made the mistake of sending his heavily armed horsemen to ride against the Scottish battalions and try to break them up. This shows that he had forgotten the lesson which his father had learned at Falkirk. As the horsemen advanced they found that the ground in front of the enemy's line was full of pits, into which their horses floundered. When they had struggled past these and reached the Scots, they found

that by no effort could they force their way past the spear-points and into the battalions. Suddenly the English beheld another Scottish army coming over a hill-top with banners and shouts. It was only a mob of servants, but the English were terrified into flight. King Edward was the first to run. James Douglas, one of the most faithful followers of Bruce, started from the battlefield with sixty horsemen, and chased the English king and his 500 knights hard to Dunbar. There the fugitives took ship, calling on heaven to help them. The rest of the English army was killed, captured, or dispersed.

The Scottish army found much booty on the field of Bannockburn—Edward's wardrobe and arms, his supply waggons, the robes in which priests had intended to thank God for a great victory, pay-chests, and many a piece of silver plate. For two hundred years afterwards in the houses of Scotland there were many articles which had been found on the field of Bannockburn. Many a Scot became rich with the ransoms which his English prisoners paid. In 1315 England saw many men starting for Scotland with money in their pockets to buy the freedom of their fathers and brothers and cousins. But the greatest boon won at Bannockburn was Scottish liberty.

Year after year till 1328 the Scots came across the borders to carry off Englishmen's cattle, and burn their houses and churches. It was at this time that the English and Scottish borderers learned that habit of constantly stealing one another's cattle, which they began to lose only in the seventeenth century. Sometimes Bruce himself led the Scottish raiders, sometimes his great warrior Douglas. Many and many a village in Northumberland, Cumberland, Durham, and even in

Yorkshire lost all its corn, and had to buy more for sowing with at a great price. Many an Englishman was reduced to eating horses, dogs, and cats because the Scots had driven off his sheep and cows. It was a common thing for a farmhouse to need a new roof every year for several years running ; for the Scots set fire to thatched roofs. Even the churches and the monasteries lost their valuables. Englishmen who saw the camps of the Scottish raiders tell how these men boiled their meat in the skins of the animals lately killed, or roasted it on spits ; made their shoes from raw hides ; cooked cakes of oatmeal on iron plates, and drank the waters of the nearest lake or stream. To catch them was impossible. At last, in 1328, peace was made.

But if you go to the borders to-day you will see the remains of many castles and towers and strongly-built farmhouses, and you will know that in all that country there must have been constant fighting for many centuries. When the kings were at peace their subjects on the borders were often at war and trying to steal one another's cattle. There is a story told that once upon a time a border chief and his men sat down to dinner. When the cover was removed from the big dish in front of the chief, there was found under it no meat but a pair of spurs. The lady of the house meant her husband and his men to understand that there was no meat to eat, and that they must ride into England to steal some cattle.

CHAPTER XXII.—EDWARD II. AND HIS BAD GOVERNMENT

EDWARD THE SECOND, who lost the battle of Bannockburn, became king in 1307. He was the son of Edward the First, but was so different from his father that people said the real royal baby had been carried away, and another one put in its place.

At his coronation in Westminster Abbey the king was asked by the bishop who placed the crown on his head, “Sire, are you willing to hold and keep the laws and righteous customs which the people of your realm have chosen, and will you defend and strengthen them to the honour of God and to the utmost of your power ?” And Edward, in the presence of the whole congregation, replied, “I promise.” The bishop was thinking, no doubt, of the new English parliament and of the power which representatives in parliament had to grant or refuse money. But Edward forgot his promise. He was not fit to be a king. He loved the company of actors, singers, coachmen, ditchers, watermen, blacksmiths, sailors, and such-like people. He had a passion for theatricals and a great fondness for horses and dogs. No one looks down on a good ditcher who knows how to drain fields, or despises a man who loves horses, and Edward’s delight in such society need not have made him a bad king. Unhappily, he neglected his real work, which was to

govern England well. He thought a great deal more about finding a good fiddler and getting good horses and dogs and a supply of trumpets for his company of little boy actors than about the government. One man, who afterwards became Archbishop of Canterbury, first won his way to royal favour because he was the best amateur actor that Edward knew.

Even when he chose friends from among the higher class, he chose badly, and ruined them by his fondness for them. One of his acquaintances was called Piers Gaveston, who was nothing but a strutting fool. He gave him so much wealth and power that Englishmen were filled with jealousy. Nearly the whole kingdom hated the favourite; even little children and old men spoke against him. But Piers acted as if he were a king like Edward; the king called him "my brother Piers" and ruled the realm according to his wish. The favourite's head was turned. He gave nicknames to his rivals, the greatest nobles in the land. One he called "Old pig," another "Cuckoo." To Guy, Earl of Warwick, he gave the title "Black dog." When Guy heard this he said, "Then I shall bite him."

In 1311 the jealous barons joined together, and compelled the king to send Piers out of England. Then they chose ministers for the king, and compelled him to govern with their advice. He was not even allowed to choose the servants of his household without their permission. But in 1312 Piers came back. You will not be surprised to hear that Guy was his bitterest enemy. One Saturday, early in the morning, he rode with armed men into the courtyard of the house where Piers was sleeping, and called in a loud voice, "Arise, traitor! You are taken!" Piers made no resistance. He put on his clothes, came down from his room, and was carried off

like a thief to Warwick. The other angry earls came to that town, and decided that Piers should die. They resolved not to hang him. They thought that because he was a noble it would be more honourable to behead him. About nine o'clock in the morning Piers was brought out from his prison, and beheaded on Blacklow Hill. When Edward heard of his death he grieved greatly, but after a while he said to the men around him, "He acted like a fool."

But England was no better governed after all. In 1314 came the awful defeat of Bannockburn. Men said that only once before had such a gallant army of horsemen been defeated by footsoldiers, and in that defeat the horsemen were French, so the English disgrace was thought to be all the bigger.

Edward was not a man who could do without favourites. He found a noble called Hugh Despenser to take Piers' place. And all this time the Scots were making raids into England. Eight years after Bannockburn, Edward marched north to invade Scotland again, but Bruce, the Scottish king, dashed into England with such rapidity that Edward was surprised and had to flee. Terror fell on the English who lived in the north. The monks in some of the monasteries of Yorkshire put their silver cups, costly clothes of silk, and their precious relics and books on to carts and waggons, and fled with them across the Humber into Lincolnshire, where they hoped the Scots would not reach them. Monks of other monasteries gave wine, beer, bread, and other food to the Scots, in order that they might not burn their monasteries and farms. Many a farmer who had once been rich in cows and crops became so poor that he had to beg his bread on the roadside.

At last Edward's own wife turned against him and

deposed him in 1327. He was put in prison in Berkeley Castle, and his son Edward III. reigned in his place. One night a frightful cry roused the villagers outside the castle from their sleep; in the morning they heard that Edward II. was dead.

CHAPTER XXIII.—EDWARD III. AND PARLIAMENT

EDWARD THE THIRD reigned from 1327 to 1377. In 1337 he commenced the long struggle with France which is called the “Hundred Years’ War.” The large supplies of money which were needed throughout his reign, made it possible for parliament to bargain with him. At this time, therefore, parliament became strong.

Hitherto the barons, earls, bishops, knights of the shire, and representatives of the towns, had always sat together in Westminster Hall. No doubt it was the barons and the bishops who did most of the talking. Citizens and even knights in those days probably thought it decent behaviour to be silent in the presence of men they considered their betters. So it must have been a relief to them when the custom arose for the barons, earls, and bishops to sit in a big room in the king’s palace and for the knights and citizens to sit in the Chapter House of Westminster Abbey close by. The citizens knew the knights, for they often met them in the county court; so shyness disappeared. The house of the nobles came to be called the House of Lords, and the house of the knights and citizens the House of Commons.

This separate House of Commons began to be very important in the eyes of the king. It was there that the representatives of the merchant class sat. The merchants of the towns were becoming wealthy owing to trade with

Flemings and with other foreign merchants who came to England, and the king knew that the more trade they did the richer they would be, and the more money they would grant in parliament. So when the Count of Flanders tried to prevent Flemings from buying English wool and to ruin English merchants and woolgrowers, Edward III. helped the angry Flemings against him. When French pirates sailed the sea he got together a fleet and destroyed them at Sluys. Harbours were improved, quays were built, good streets were made, roads were kept clear, and foreigners were encouraged to come over and buy wool and other things at English fairs. Of course they brought goods with them, such as silks and velvets from Italy, linen and woollen cloth from Flanders, furs and amber from north Europe, wine from Gascony and Spain, iron from Norway and Spain, candles from Paris, tar from Norway, and many other things.

English merchants began to have much money to spend, so guilds or companies of manufacturers grew up to make articles for sale, such as shoes, saddles and bridles, gold and silver plate, gloves, swords, bows, arrows, armour, embroidery, pots and pans, hats, and other goods. The manufacturers, who made all these things, had men and apprentices working for them. On many a village green can be seen the crosses, round which they and their men sold their goods. Fine houses began to rise in the towns. Wood and plaster, of course, were still used for house building, but bricks and stone were beginning to be used also, and houses became bigger than before. The wealthy merchants who built them began to buy land in the country places, and married ladies of high rank. Many of them built fine churches with their money, or set up almshouses for old people, or established schools. They were buried in their churches, and images of them

lying on their backs were carved in stone, and set up over their tombs ; from these we can tell the manner of dress in Edward the Third's time.

A great deal of the king's income came from the pockets of these merchants and manufacturers, so he treated their representatives in the House of Commons with respect. In Norman days kings took advice from barons only, but Edward III. began to consult the whole of parliament about his business ; and, indeed, parliament advised him to make war on France, and made liberal grants of money for campaigns.

But although it was willing enough that the king should be well supplied with money, it was careful to insist that he should levy no tenths or fifteenths and no taxes on wool without its permission. Edward the First in 1297 had promised not to tax wool unless parliament allowed, but Edward the Third did not consider himself bound by his grandfather's promises. It was necessary for parliament by a series of laws in 1340, 1362, and 1371 to make it clear that the king had no right to take tenths and fifteenths, or to impose taxes on wool without the consent of the "prelates, earls, barons, and other great men, and the commons of the realm assembled in parliament."

In Edward the Third's reign parliament also won some control over law-making or legislation. Edward needed money, and so was compelled to make the kind of laws that parliament wanted. At first when the House of Commons or House of Lords desired a new law to be made, they sent a petition to the king, begging him to make it. Usually the king needed money, so he promised to make the law. Then, after giving the money which the king wanted, parliament went home. Soon it found that the king had forgotten his promise, or that

the law made in answer to its petition was not satisfactory. So later on in the reign parliament constantly insisted that the king should put down in writing what kind of laws he intended to make. The writing was to be sealed with his seal, and shown to the members of parliament before they went home. In this way parliament began to know what laws were being made by the king in return for the people's money.

CHAPTER XXIV.—EDWARD THE THIRD AND THE FRENCH WAR *

EVER since the reign of Henry II. the English kings had possessed territories in southern France. They valued these lands because of the sea trade which had grown up with them. The chief town in those parts was the seaport of Bordeaux. From this port ships went to England carrying cargoes of wine. All the country near Bordeaux still grows vines, and from their grapes splendid wine is made. The climate suits vine growing. The winters are rarely cold. The summers are intensely hot and dry. The country is mostly flat or undulating, so the sun's rays are not shut off by high hills. The soil is thus thoroughly warmed, and seems to retain a great deal of its heat in winter time. All this makes the grape vine flourish. In the reign of Edward III. a large part of this district still belonged to England, and Englishmen much enjoyed the wines, which French merchants exported to Southampton, Bristol, and London by ship.

But Philip, the King of France, disliked to see Englishmen holding French soil, and was slowly seizing the English territory. The merchants of Bordeaux and their English customers feared that Philip would try to prevent the wine ships from running to Southampton and London and Bristol. Then the cost of wine in England would go

* See P. P. Hists. :—
Jun. Bk. IV., Chap. XXI.
Sen. Bk. I., Chap. V.

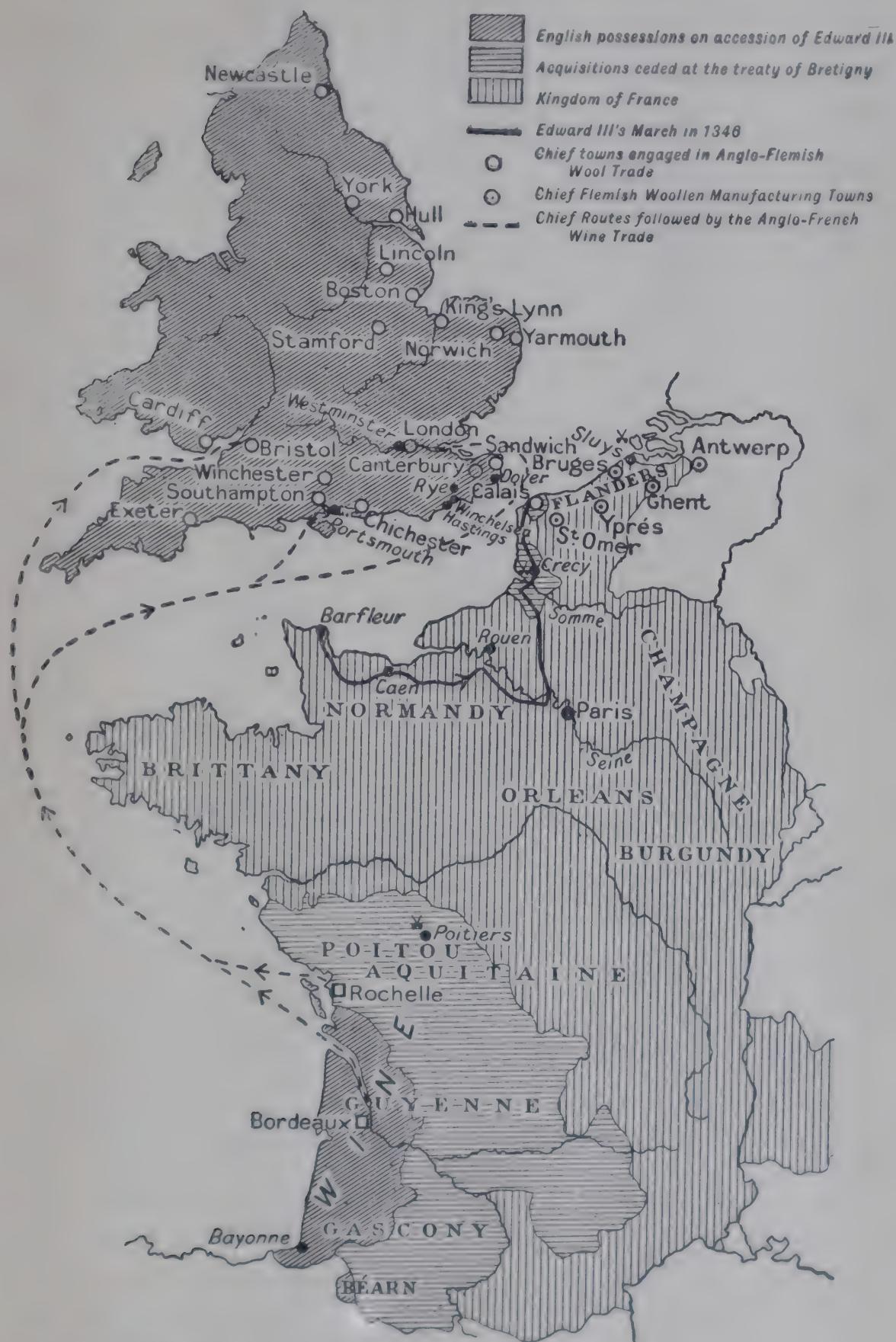


FIG. 63.—Map illustrating the Wine and Woollen Trades and showing the French Territories held by the English in 1360.

up, for less would be seen on sale at English fairs. In the reign of Edward III, this led to war between England and France.

There was a second cause of war. Philip of France tried to interfere with the great trade in wool, which the English and Flemish cities carried on. The Count of Flanders was a friend of Philip, and to please him in 1336 forbade the Flemings to buy any wool from the English, or to sell them any cloth. If they had obeyed him, weaving looms throughout every Flemish city would soon have stood still for want of English wool. Harbours would have been full of idle ships. Weavers and spinners and sailors would have wandered in starvation up and down the city streets. The Flemings determined to avoid all this by disobeying their count and making friends with Edward. They took the English king for their lord, and he promised to defend them against Philip and their own count. This, of course, pleased the English farmers, who had wool to sell. Philip and the Count of Flanders would have ruined them also if they had had their way. Edward, by making friends of the Flemings, and helping them to come to the English fairs, where great sacks of wool were sold, helped his own people to grow rich. Every peasant who had sheep, every shepherd, sheep shearer, Cistercian monk, tar merchant, wool merchant, sailor, and wool carrier was delighted, and promised light-heartedly to pay the king's taxes.

To please the Flemings still more Edward took the title "King of France." His mother was the daughter of a French king and the sister of French kings. When the last of her brothers had died in 1328, Edward said he should have been chosen King of France. But the French nobles said Philip of Valois was the next heir and

gave him the crown. It was this Philip who was trying to drive the English out of Guienne, and destroy their trade with the Flemings. Consequently Edward thought that the best way to preserve that trade and save his wine-lands in the south was to make himself king of France. The kings of France always had lilies painted on their shields, and the kings of England had lions. Edward the Third adopted both lilies and lions to show that he was king of both countries ; you can see them sculptured on his tomb in Westminster Abbey.

But he could not really become king of France unless he conquered that country by war, and to make war money is necessary. Edward asked Parliament to give it. Parliament was willing, and often gave him a fifteenth to be paid by country people and a tenth to be paid by townspeople. At this time a tenth and a fifteenth brought to the king about £38,000. But Edward found that this was not enough. In 1339, only two years after the war began, Edward was so badly off that he had to pawn two of his own crowns and his wife's crown to German merchants. It was five years before he was able to take them out of pawn. Other ways of raising money were tried. In 1341 Parliament allowed the king to take from merchants 30,000 sacks of wool, which he sold. Sometimes they allowed him to put a tax of £2 on each sack of wool exported from England. Sometimes the king tried to put a tax on wool without asking Parliament's permission, and had to be reminded of the promise of his grandfather, Edward I., and of his father, Edward II. Parliament compelled him to make similar promises.

Edward had to collect soldiers as well as money. The

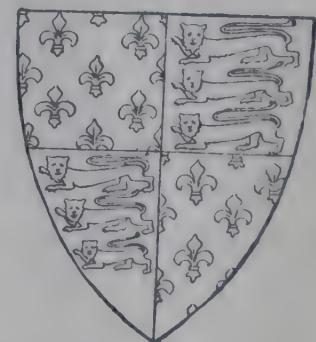


FIG. 64.—Coat of Arms of Edward III.

Norman way of collecting an army was to send word to barons and their knights to meet at some spot, and do the military service they owed. But this old feudal way, by which tenants followed their lords, had gone out of fashion

in Edward the Third's time.

He usually made arrangements with knights or barons that he would pay them money if they would enlist a body of soldiers and lead them in battle. Then the knight or baron went down to the county where he was well known, and enlisted as many men as he needed or could persuade to follow him, and gave them the proper weapons. The horsemen of the time were called men-at-arms or knights. They were armed from top to toe with helmets, coats of mail, gloves, and leggings of steel. They had, as striking weapons, lances, swords, and daggers; they also carried shields. Each of them usually had two heavy war horses and a pony. Each also had an



FIG. 65.—Knight in the time of
Edward III.

From a figure on a tomb.

attendant squire, who kept his armour bright, mended it, and carried it on the march, when the knight did not need it. When battle was at hand he helped his master to buckle and screw it on. The knight was paid two shillings a day and his squire one shilling.

It needed a very strong horse to carry an armoured man. The weight of the riders was so great that the horses could not gallop fast. When a number of men-at-arms charged they merely trotted up to the enemy's line ; they did not dash at a wild pace like the Light Brigade at Balaclava. So it was possible for spearmen on foot to resist the attack of horsemen.

But the most important men in the English armies of Edward III. were the archers, armed with the long bow. Their bows cost one shilling if they were unpainted and one shilling and sixpence if they were painted. A bundle of twenty-four arrows cost twelve or fourteen pence. The bow was six feet four inches long, and the arrows about a yard. A good archer could send an arrow 240 yards. The defensive armour of an archer was usually a steel cap. His pay was threepence a day. Besides archers and men-at-arms, each English force had spearmen attached to it. They received twopence a day. English cannon were first heard of in 1344.

In France it was quite different ; French armies were still feudal. When King Philip gathered his soldiers to meet the English they were almost all tenants-in-chief with their feudal knights. All of them were on horseback, and their weapons of offence were sword and lance. Every one of them was covered with armour. Englishmen in their Scottish wars had learned that knights could not destroy a body of spearmen by riding against it. You will see soon that Frenchmen had not learned that lesson.

As soon as war broke out all the southern part of England was alarmed by French ships which put French soldiers on English soil to burn towns and kill inhabitants. Even London, big as it was, was terrified. Little towns along the coast listened eagerly for the sound of their church bells, for if all the churches in the town were

heard ringing their bells at once, that was a sign the French plunderers were at hand. By night men turned their eyes to see if the beacons were blazing. In 1340, however, Edward determined to prevent French attacks. He collected a fleet. Most of Edward's ships were galleys. A galley was a ship which was driven partly by oars and partly by sails. We read of one of these galleys called *La Phelipe*. Its mast cost £10 and was about fifty feet long ; its bowsprit cost £2 3s. 4d. It had one big anchor and five smaller ones. Its sails were dyed red. There were eighty oars and an awning to cover the oarsmen. The rudder was shaped something like rudders to-day.

With 250 ships Edward sailed on June 22, 1340. Next day he found the French fleet lying in the port of Sluys in Flanders. On the 24th the French ships sailed out in four divisions : all the ships of each division were chained together. Edward's men sailed up to the first division, boarded its vessels, and fought hard with sword and axe, while English archers shot their arrows thick and fast, until the French were conquered. Then the sailors and soldiers of the second and third divisions took fright, threw away their weapons, and rushed into their row-boats to get ashore. But the rowboats were swamped and 2000 men were drowned. The fourth division got away but many of its ships were captured soon after. King Edward then wrote a letter to his son at home telling of the victory. This letter is the first of a long series of naval despatches, which have brought news of success to England. The king wrote : "We would have you know that the number of the ships, galleys, and large barges of our enemies amounted to 190, and that they were all taken, save twenty-four altogether which fled. And some of these have since been taken."

No more great victories were won till 1346. In that

year Edward and his son Edward, the Black Prince, aged sixteen, landed in Normandy. They had 20,000 men-at-arms, archers, spearmen, smiths, carpenters, masons, and miners. The English army had some small cannon and some gunners to work them. Edward took



FIG. 66.—An old French Picture of the Battle of Sluys.

some towns, and marched quite close to the walls of Paris, where the French King, Philip, was waiting for his feudal army to collect. The terrified French peasants had fled into the city to escape the plundering Englishmen, and were calling to King Philip to march out and save their burning farms and villages. Edward found that the French army was increasing in size, so he crossed

the river Seine, and marched north to the river Somme. He crossed it near its mouth, by a ford called Blanche Taque. The French were following fast, but by the time they reached the river the tide had come up the estuary, and the ford was covered by deep water. As Edward marched northwards to the seaport of Calais he came to a village called Crecy, and there he made up his mind to wait and fight a battle against Philip.

He placed his soldiers on the sloping side of a valley. The valley in front of them was 600 yards wide. On their right was a wood through which horsemen could not ride to attack them. On their left was a little village. From the forest on the right to the village on the left was about a mile.

All the English men-at-arms dismounted and formed two battalions or "battles." The Black Prince commanded one and the Earl of Northampton the other. In the gap between the battles, and on their flanks, the archers were placed. The archers stood a little further forward than the men-at-arms. On the crest of the hill behind the English line was a windmill, and here King Edward took his stand with 8000 soldiers to watch his 12,000 other soldiers fight 60,000 or 80,000 Frenchmen. By Saturday morning, August 26, the English were ready, but there was not a Frenchman to be seen. The enemy were still far off, marching along the road to Crecy. So King Edward ordered all his men to eat some food. After they had eaten and drunk, they packed up all their pots and pans carefully in their carts, returned to their places, and sat down to wait for the enemy.

Then Edward, standing by his mill and looking over the country, saw the French horsemen approaching. King Philip's army was in disorder. The men in the rear were eight miles behind those in front. So orders were given

for the front ranks to halt until the rear ranks came up. But no one obeyed. When the badly-behaved French horsemen came in sight of the English sitting quietly on the slopes of the valley, they longed to attack them. They did not think that men on foot with spears and arrows could resist men on horseback. So the leading French division pushed on despite Philip's command.

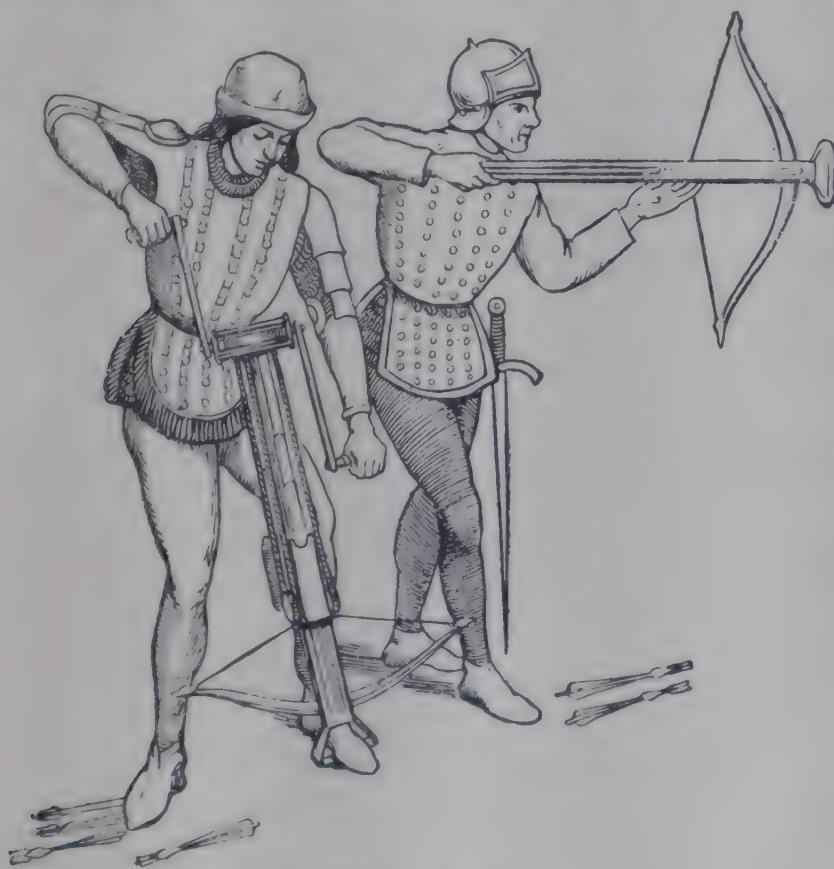


FIG. 67.—Crossbowmen.

From a French picture of the fourteenth century.

When he saw them disobeying he changed his mind, and gave the order to attack. He thought the battle would soon be over.

It was now evening time. Edward on his hilltop first of all saw a line of Genoese crossbowmen move out in front of the leading French division. They were very tired, for they had been marching all day. The English rose to their feet and waited. When the Genoese were near enough to the English they began to shoot. The English

shot too, and shot so much faster than the Genoese that soon Edward saw the hostile archers running back.

Then he beheld a dreadful sight. The leading body of French horsemen were so disgusted with their archers that they rode right through them. They must have killed many of them. Then they charged against the Black Prince's men. But the English bowmen shot as fast as they could at horse and man. Soon the French were in confusion ; men were falling from horses, horses were kicking, rearing, and throwing themselves on the ground. Very few French horsemen reached the English line at all, but those who did so fought well. The Black Prince was knocked down, and only saved by his standard-bearer. But the king would not send help. "Let the boy win his spurs," he said.

As each body of French men-at-arms came in sight of the English line, it charged as the first one had done. Daylight died away. But the fight went on till midnight. By that time the French cavalry had charged fifteen or sixteen times against the English line, and been defeated every time. At last when silence fell upon the field the Englishmen lit fires, and King Edward left the windmill, from which he had watched the French attacks, and embraced his son.

Next day, Sunday, the French foot soldiers appeared, and fighting began again. But again the English won the day. On Monday the English continued their march to Calais, which they intended to capture. Calais stood opposite the English town of Dover. At this part of the Straits of Dover there are only a little more than twenty-four miles between England and France. From Dover it is quite easy to see the French coast. Many ships trading to London had to sail past Calais. The wine boats from Bordeaux kept as near Dover as they could,

lest French pirates should dash out and seize them. The boats that carried English wool to Flanders were constantly attacked by Calais sailors. Dwellers on the south coast in Rye, Winchelsea, Hastings, Portsmouth, and even Londoners were in constant fear that a fleet from Calais might appear at any moment. No wonder Edward wished to capture the port.



FIG. 68.—Calais in the Fourteenth Century.

From an old French picture.

All winter he besieged it. His fleet, numbering 700 little ships, lay outside the harbour so that few French ships could carry in food. Foggy weather helped them to slip in sometimes, but food became so scarce that the French commander drove 1700 old men, women, and children out of the city to starve. Edward in pity fed them, and let them go. At last King Philip came up with another army. But he dared not fight. He

marched away again, and Calais surrendered. Edward promised to spare the lives of the citizens, if six principal men would come to him with bare heads and feet and with ropes round their necks ready to be hanged. Six men who were not afraid to die offered themselves. But Edward at his wife's request spared these also. Every merchant and sailor and wool grower in England, every dweller on the south coast, every wine grower in Gascony, and every spinner and weaver in Flanders rejoiced at the English success, for there would now be no more French pirates in the Channel.

The kings of Europe were amazed. They knew about the English defeats at Bannockburn and Stirling, and had begun to regard Englishmen as the worst soldiers and greatest cowards in the world. And now they heard that Englishmen on foot had defeated fifteen or sixteen attacks of French knights, and captured many French towns.

From 1347 till 1355 England and France were mostly at peace. But in the latter year the Black Prince was sent to Aquitaine with an army. During the years of peace the French had been seizing the English lands bit by bit. The Prince determined on revenge. He marched through Southern France to the Mediterranean burning towns, villages, castles, destroying crops, vines, and cattle, and killing inhabitants. Monasteries were robbed, and wine in consequence was so plentiful that it was given to horses when water was scarce. For eight weeks this ravaging continued. So that a land, which had once sent great revenues to the French king, could now send no more. The English carried to Bordeaux carpets, tapestries, jewels, clothes, weapons, silver cups, sheets, pots and pans, feather beds, candlesticks, and property of all kinds in cartloads. Nobles became rich, and many an Englishman was able to build and furnish a castle

out of French plunder. English women could be seen going about in the clothes, which their husbands had stolen from the wardrobes of French ladies.

In 1356 the Prince made another plundering raid. This time he marched north, doing exactly what he had done the previous year. But on this occasion King John, Philip's son, caught him up with an army at Poitiers. The Prince's horses were so laden with booty that they could not march fast enough to escape. The English army numbered 7500 ; the French 20,000. This time the French attacked on foot. But it was the same story as at Crecy. English archers won the day, and the French king was captured.

So the English with their great booty and great glory got safely back to Bordeaux. Next year the Prince brought his prisoner King John to England. The crowds that greeted him in London streets were so dense that it took over three hours to get from the bridge to Westminster Palace, where King Edward was waiting.

In 1360 peace was made. John was released on condition that he paid a ransom of £500,000 and gave to the English all the land of Aquitaine and the town of Calais.

But soon the English found that they were too small a nation to resist the French continually. They could win great victories, but they had not enough soldiers to guard all the towns, castles, and lands which they had won. All around them were enemies, who were always attacking places where the English soldiers were few. Then the people at home began to hear of towns and castles and lands that were being lost and began to complain about heavy taxes. King Edward, who liked great battles, but disliked protecting his conquests stayed at home, and his son the Black Prince became an invalid. So, although the English were the best fighters, the French

in fourteen years nevertheless recaptured all except the towns of Calais, Bordeaux, and Bayonne, and the lands near them.

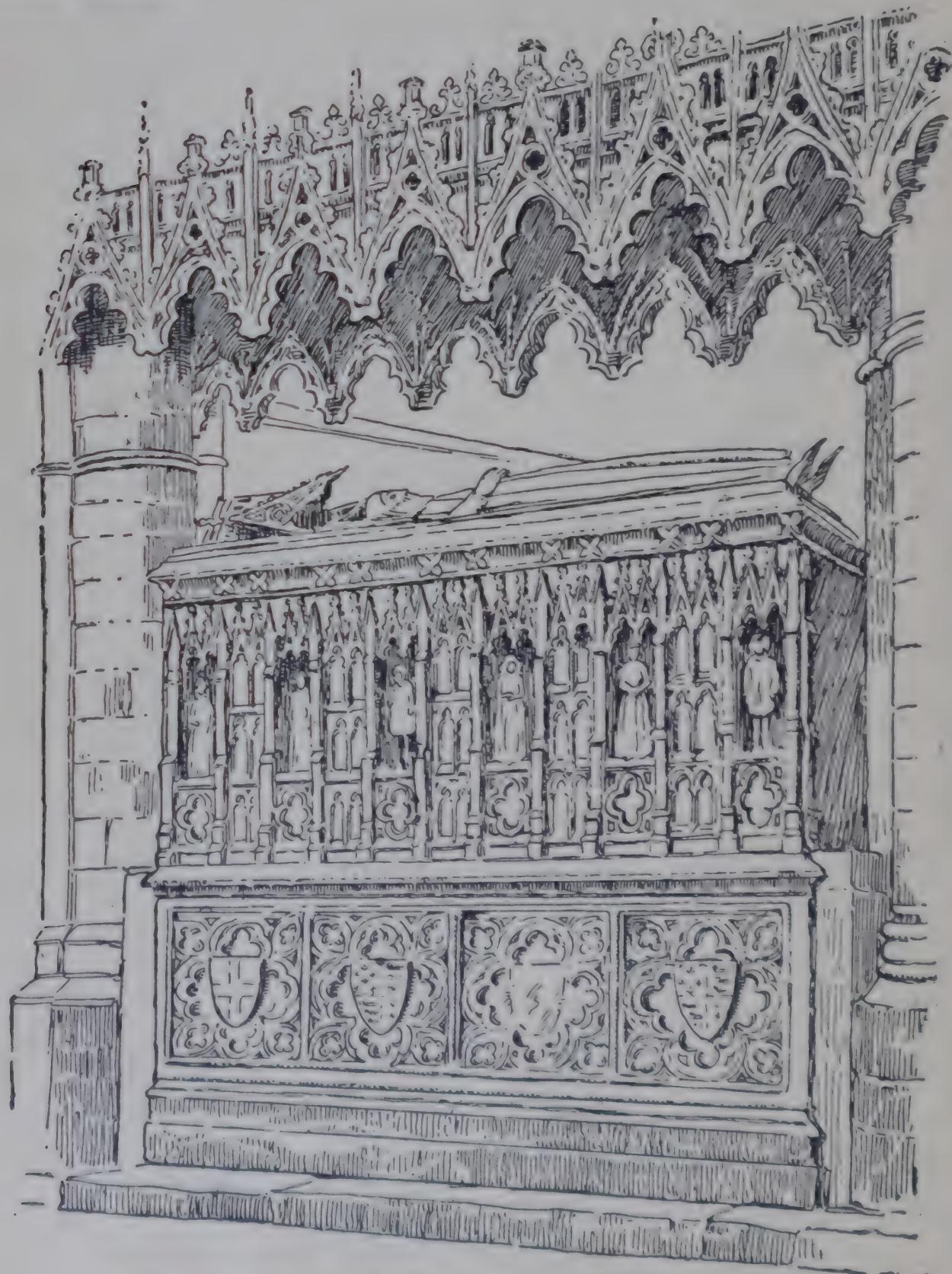


FIG. 69.—The Tomb of Edward III. in Westminster Abbey.

CHAPTER XXV.—RICHARD II*

EDWARD III. died in 1377. He was succeeded by his grandson Richard the Second, son of the Black Prince, who won the victories of Crecy and Poitiers. Richard was only eleven years old. He had a sad face, grey eyes, and long brown hair. Even as a boy he was brave like his father. But his temper was always a strange one, and when he grew up to be eighteen years old, he had fits of passion in which he did not know what he was doing. Once in madness he tore off his hat and shoes and flung them out of the window ; another time, in the House of Lords, he swore in a very insulting way at his guardian the Earl of Arundel, and called him a liar ; once he drew his sword against Courtenay, the Bishop of London, and would have done murder had not bystanders prevented him. It is thought that he was a little mad. He certainly tried to do strange things which Englishmen could not tolerate.

There were many reasons why a young English king should be sad. Constantly bad news came from France where war was still being waged. The little king frequently heard his councillors telling one another how England was losing the lands which Edward III. and the Black Prince had conquered ; how French sailors were attacking English fishing boats ; and how French

* See P. P. Hists. :—

Jun. Bk. IV., Chaps. XVII., XXII., XXIII., XXIV
Jun. Bk. III., Richard II. and Wat Tyler.

soldiers sometimes landed on English coasts, and burned English towns. But no one thought of giving up the conquered lands in France ; despite continual defeats, the King's councillors preferred to go on fighting, and in order to do so, they took much money in taxes from poor people.

This taxation made the villeins furious. Even before the taxgatherers began to come so often the villeins



FIG. 70.—English Peasants.

From the Louterell Psalter.

were angry about other things. Richard's teachers must very often have told him about the Black Death of 1348, and how ever since that date villeins had been asking to be released from tilling their lords' lands, mending their barns, carting their harvest, and so on. Hitherto they had paid in this way for the lands which lords allowed them to till for their own benefit. But now they wished to be free ; they hated going to the lords' stewards in the morning to hear what the day's orders were, and

wished to pay fourpence an acre for their land instead. The lords refused, and when villeins left their lands and fled to towns to work in freedom there, the lords dragged them back to the villages. All this came to the boy's ears, and perhaps helped to sadden him.

Free labourers, who had no lands of their own, but worked for wages on other men's, were asking now for higher wages. The House of Lords and the House of Commons were enraged with them for this, and passed laws threatening them with fines and imprisonment. So in 1381 villeins and labourers rose in rebellion under Wat Tyler, and marched to London to see the King. He was only fifteen years old, but perhaps his heart was touched. He promised them freedom, and they went home satisfied. But Parliament refused to confirm the young king's promises. So there was misery in the villages. Richard soon learned that the landlords of those days were cruel men.

There were other troubles in the land for Richard to hear about. Englishmen were becoming discontented with the Church. Many priests who were paid to work in English villages never did so; they stayed in London and worked for wealthy men, keeping their accounts for them, and looking after their jewels and clothes. They sent a poorer priest to do their proper work in the village church, and only gave him a very small part of the money, which they received themselves. When villagers in consequence refused to pay tithe they were brought before church courts and fined. Rich

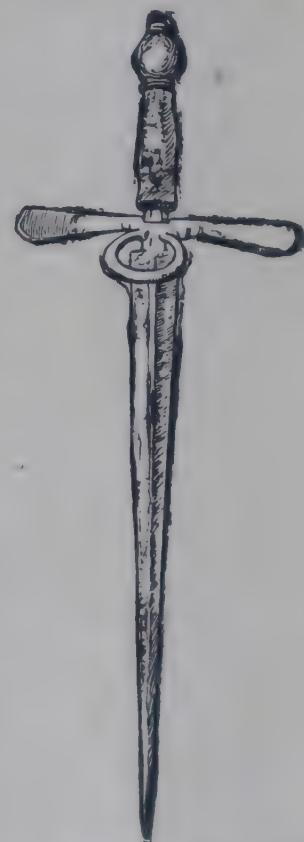


FIG. 71.—The Dagger with which Walworth stabbed Wat Tyler. Still preserved at Fishmongers' Hall, in London.

men, who came to priests to confess sins, were not ordered to do penance. Priests took money from them instead. Many priests kept horses and dogs, and went hunting every day. Their voices were heard hallooing in the woods and fields when they should have been raised in prayers and praises to God. The poor were not helped ; the sick were not visited.

The friars had lost their early holiness, and pretended to grant forgiveness for sins to people who gave them money. Many of them sold false relics to the ignorant, pretending they were a protection against all kinds of harm. They could be seen on every road pretending to be poor and begging from every one. In reality they were rich. Their churches and houses were built in costly styles, and were filled with the richest ornaments of gold and silver.

Pilgrimages which had once been soberly undertaken for the soul's good had become jolly holidays.

A famous man protested against all this. His name was John Wicliffe. He spoke hotly against clergymen, who neglected their real work, and gave all their time to managing the King's accounts, or working in nobles' houses. In his opinion relics and pilgrimages could help no man to lead a better life. He preached against friars who granted pardons for money. According to him, the best guide to holiness was the Bible, and not priests and friars. So he and a friend translated the whole of the Scriptures from Latin into English, and put them into the hands of men called "Poor Preachers" who travelled through the country on bare feet and in russet gowns, preaching against friars and relics. They and other followers were called Lollards, or Babblers, and could be heard on many a village green. Many of them went so far as to say that all lands should be taken

from the Church. Priests and monks would then live in poverty, like Christ and His disciples ; they would think no longer about luxurious living, but of their work.

These doctrines were much liked by many people. When a strolling Poor Preacher appeared at the kitchen door of a big house, he was often heartily welcomed and well fed. Then when he preached afterwards against pilgrimages, relics, and false forgiveness, the wealthy host and his friends listened attentively.

Richard's mother was friendly towards Wycliffe, and thought that his Lollards preached good opinions. So perhaps Richard also thought well of them, and perhaps they thought that some day he would do as they advised.

But the greatest of Richard's troubles came from the great nobles of the realm. In the years after the Norman Conquest English kings had tried to prevent their nobles from forming great estates, because in this way a noble could keep many soldiers and raise armies to fight against the king. The sheriff, who was the king's officer, could not keep a great baron in order if he had many soldiers and castles. Kings in later times seemed to forget this, and some nobles had wide possessions in many parts of England. Edward III. married some of his sons to very wealthy heiresses. These sons and other wealthy nobles were called "overmighty subjects" because they were too strong to be kept in order. Their descendants troubled England and English kings for a hundred years. The most important of Edward's sons after the Black Prince were Lionel, Duke of Clarence, John of Gaunt, Edmund of Langley, and Thomas of Woodstock.* Three of these married women who had very great estates. In 1377 Lionel was already dead. His wealthy daughter Philippa had married a

* See Table on page 243.

wealthy man called Edmund Mortimer, Earl of March. Philippa and Edmund had two children, Roger and Edmund. As King Richard had no children of his own, he later on chose young Roger to be king after him. He was right in doing this, for Roger was really the next heir.

But the greatest of the royal uncles was John of Gaunt. He had married the heiress of the Duchy of Lancaster and of all its enormous estates. The title Duke of Lancaster became his in consequence. He was also Earl of Derby and Earl of Lincoln. No man had so many castles and land or so much money. Under him he had many tenants who owed him military service. From these he took aids or taxes. From their heirs he took reliefs. If heirs were under age he had the wardship of their lands. If the heir were a woman, no man could marry her unless he won John's permission, and paid him well. Many fisheries, moors, marshes, woods, warrens, fens, markets and parks supplied John with money.

He had thirty castles of his own ; the southernmost was Pevensey, which once had been a Roman fort, and had seen William the Conqueror land in 1066. The northernmost was Dunstanburgh, on the coast of Northumberland ; its soldiers many a time had seen the banners of marauding Scots. Each castle had an officer to command it, see to the repair of its walls, supply it with bows and arrows, and with guns and stone-throwing engines.

In many parts of England John had forests with many officers, called foresters, in them. These men looked after the deer, watched the growth of trees and brushwood, charged money for timber and firewood, chased and punished men who poached or cut wood without permission, counted the fish in the ponds, gave venison and wood to gentlemen and abbots and priests,

when John sent them orders to do so. They were busy men, for in those days there were more poachers than now. Even parsons went a-poaching.

John had innumerable other officers ; boys to watch hounds, stable boys, falconers, clerks who kept accounts, stewards who watched the clerks, and inspectors who watched stewards. Much of his income was sent to his great palace of the Savoy in the Strand, near London. There he had an army of cooks, butchers, buyers, and keepers of wardrobes ; warders of diamonds, of rubies, and of emeralds ; minstrels and bargemen. In his pay were a hundred knights, ever ready to fight on his behalf, and to bring their soldiers with them. The humblest received £10 a year, the greatest about £375. In time of war their pay was doubled.

The enormous wealth of this man made people suspicious that he intended to depose his nephew, and reign in his place. This was unfair to John. There is no proof that he intended to do any such thing. But Richard feared him and his son Henry Bolingbroke all his life. And certainly little Roger, son of Philippa and Edmund Mortimer, Earl of March, who was to be Richard's heir if the king had no children, must have wondered whether some day he would have to fight against John of Gaunt and Henry his son.

The third uncle of the king was Edmund, who became Duke of York in 1385. He was not an important man, and did not marry an English heiress. But his son Richard later on married one. She was called Anne Mortimer, and was the daughter of that Roger who had been chosen as Richard's heir. This marriage was a very important one, and led to much trouble for England, as you will see later on.*

* See Table, p. 243.

The king had still another uncle called Thomas of Woodstock, Earl of Buckingham, who became in 1385 Duke of Gloucester. Richard learned to hate him even more than he hated John of Gaunt.

These royal uncles were able to make Parliament do as they pleased. At election time in Richard the Second's reign, and in many following reigns, great nobles could cause their friends to be elected. John of Gaunt, Thomas of Woodstock, and others like them, often sent orders to sheriffs, who superintended elections, that their stewards, foresters, soldiers, clerks, and friends were to be made into members of Parliament. Then each sheriff, who wished to be friendly with royal uncles and great nobles, talked to the men who came to the elections, and promised them gifts and favours if they would vote as he wanted. The electors did not care who was chosen to represent them, but were very glad to see any one take the trouble to go all the way to Parliament at Westminster. A House of Commons made in this way always did what the nobles ordered it to do, and did not care at all about what the common people of England wished. Clearly Richard could not easily resist nobles who had so many soldiers, and could make Parliament do as they pleased.

The king was only a boy when he began to reign. So at first his people did not expect him to do very much. But they spoke hopefully of what he would do when he grew up. They expected him to defend England against the French, and relieve poor men from heavy taxes. Villeins and labourers thought they would have justice when the king became a man. Lollards hoped that he would compel priests and friars to lead better lives and do their work properly. Clergymen hoped that he would prevent the Lollards from preaching against them.

When things did not go well at first people said, "The boy is blameless, but his councillors are not without fault."

And yet when Richard's age advanced every one's hopes died away. Disappointed people began to say, "The king is honoured above all, so long as his acts are good ; but if the king is greedy and proud, his people are grieved. Not all that a king wants is good for him. He must maintain law and do justice. Oh, King, do away with the evils of thy reign, restore the laws, and put an end to crime. Let thy people obey thee for love, and not fear." People clearly were not pleased with their young king when he became of age, and the older he became the less they liked him. He gathered frivolous young people about him, and gave himself up to pleasure. The court officials, who supplied food for the king's table, cruelly ill-treated the poor people who had food for sale. The king's tax collectors stole money. When Parliament wished to learn how he spent the money given to him, and begged him to send some of his friends from court, he said he would do as he pleased. That seems to have been his greatest wish all through his grown-up life. So when his uncles John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, and Thomas of Woodstock, now Duke of Gloucester, urged him to govern better, and when the latter uncle in 1386 threatened that Parliament would depose him, as Edward II., his great-grandfather, had been deposed, he made up his mind to free himself from his uncles and from Parliamentary control. He meant to make what laws he liked, take what money he wanted, rule the country as he pleased, and fill his palaces with the friends he preferred. He thought he could not be a real king until he was free to do what he liked. A man who can rule a country as he pleases is called a despot.

More than one English king has tried to make himself a despot, and every one of them has failed.

At first Richard could do nothing to make himself powerful. Although John of Gaunt was away from England, other nobles like the Duke of Gloucester, the Earl of Nottingham, the Earl of Derby, the Earl of Warwick, and the Earl of Arundel made parliaments to suit themselves, executed the king's friends, and sent others into exile.

But at last, in 1397, Richard made a plan. By that time John of Gaunt had come home. The King won his friendship, that of his son Henry Bolingbroke, Earl of Derby, and that of the Earl of Nottingham. With their help he seized and imprisoned his other enemies, and called together a Parliament that would do what he told it. He put to death his uncle the Duke of Gloucester and his uncle's friend the Earl of Arundel. The Earl of Warwick was put in gaol.

Then Richard thought it would be a good thing to get rid of Parliament altogether. So he persuaded it to allow all laws to be made and all taxes to be granted by a council of eighteen persons, twelve of whom came from the House of Lords and six from the House of Commons. No doubt the royal friends in the House of Commons thought it a splendid thing to be freed from coming up to London all the way from their homes to hear what money the king wanted, and to ask him to make laws. The eighteen councillors could give Richard permission to collect taxes and ask him, just as well as Parliament had ever done, to grant petitions and make laws. And the towns and the counties were probably pleased too, for it would no longer be necessary to pay wages to their members of Parliament. As all the eighteen were Richard's friends, he began to do exactly what he liked.

No one was likely to rise from his seat in council and say the king was spending too much money, or had chosen bad servants, or had asked bad friends to his palaces.

The only important nobles left in England now were John of Gaunt, his son Henry Bolingbroke, who was Earl of Derby, and the Earl of Nottingham. The last two had been made dukes of Hereford and Norfolk. Suddenly Richard exiled them both. The two new dukes had quarrelled together, and the king made that an excuse for sending both away. The only great noble left was John of Gaunt, and he was an old man close to death. At last Richard was able to rule as he pleased. He gathered about him a bodyguard of soldiers, and travelled up and down the country ill-treating the common folk, seizing their food, compelling people to give him money, putting men in prison, and keeping them there without trial. It seemed as though all the work of great men like Simon de Montfort and Stephen Langton had been destroyed. Richard was acting as though Magna Carta had never forbidden kings to keep men in gaol without trial, and as though Englishmen could be taxed without consent of Parliament.

At last, in 1399, John of Gaunt died, and Richard at once seized all his estates. He hoped in this way to get possession of all his late uncle's castles, money and soldiers and to use them against his enemies. Henry Bolingbroke, Duke of Hereford, now an exile, was not likely to be dangerous when deprived of all his father's lands and wealth. But by this time many men were feeling that Richard was acting like a madman. Englishmen began to dislike having their money taken from them without Parliament's consent ; they disliked to see men put in gaol and kept there without trial ; they disliked to see heirs robbed of their lands ;

they disliked a king who made himself all-powerful simply that he might be free to do what pleased him. People became convinced that he was mad, and Henry, Duke of Hereford, who was living on the continent, began to think that if he landed in England discontented men would join him.

On July 4, 1399, he came with a few followers to Yorkshire, and at once all the tenants of his father's great estates began to take his side. Men began to talk of making him king in place of Richard. They remembered, of course, quite well that Richard's proper successor should have been chosen from the descendants of Lionel, Duke of Clarence, and that Richard had picked out Lionel's grandson Roger, Earl of March, for his heir. Roger had died in 1398, so his son, little Edmund, Earl of March, had inherited his father's rights. But the followers of Henry cared not at all about that. They wanted a man to rule over them, and not a boy.

When Henry landed, Richard happened to be in Ireland. He hurried back when the news reached him, but when he came to Milford Haven, in Wales, his courage failed him. He had made many enemies even in his own army, so he fled from them by night to North Wales, and shut himself up in Conway Castle. His army joined Henry's. Soon only one hundred men were left on his side. He could not fight against the army of all England, which Henry led, so on August 19 he surrendered, and gave up his crown. Henry took him to London, where the citizens received their late king with hoots and jeers, and his conqueror with cheers. In September Parliament met, and, with never a word about little Edmund of March, accepted Henry for king.

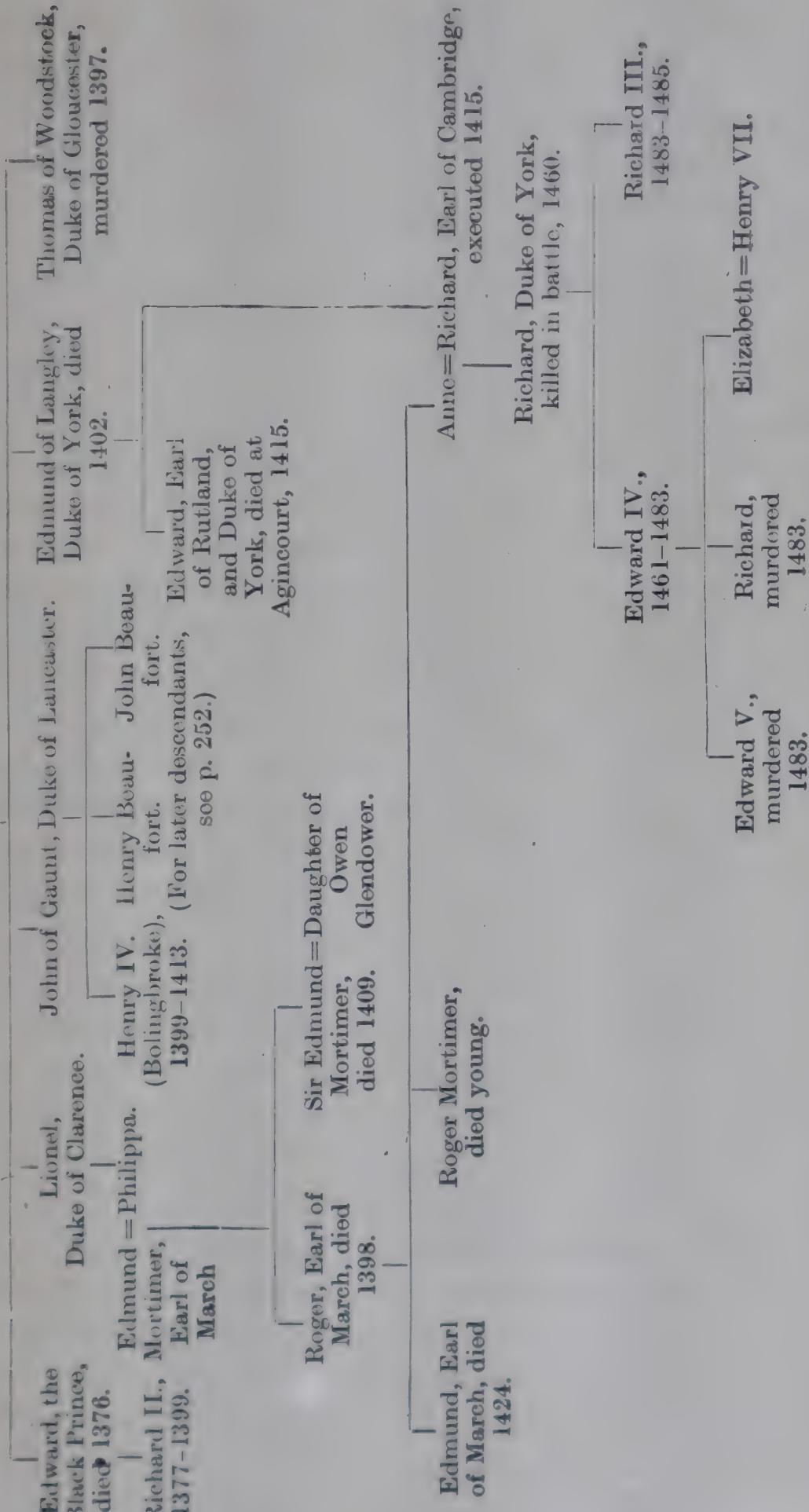
Next year Richard died. Probably he was murdered by Henry's orders.

PAGE SHOWING THE CLAIM OF THE HOUSE OF YORK TO THE THRONE

EDWARD III. 1327-1377.

RICHARD II

243



CHAPTER XXVI.—THE TROUBLES OF HENRY IV

RICHARD II. all through his reign had feared his relations, the descendants of Edward III., and other “over-mighty subjects.” His successor, Henry, called Henry IV., feared them too. He kept Edmund Mortimer, the little Earl of March, and his brother, Roger Mortimer, safe in Windsor Castle, for some people still thought that Edmund should have been king. But the boys were not confined in a gloomy prison house ; they lived with two of Henry’s own children, John and Philippa. We can still read Henry’s letter, in which he appoints a gentleman, called Hugh Waterton, to look after them, and orders the children and all people in the castle to obey him. Henry had to watch carefully his cousins, Edward, Earl of Rutland, and Richard, Earl of Cambridge. They were the sons of Edmund of Langley, and grandsons of Edward III. ; they did not forget that they too, like Henry himself, were descended from a king. Whenever Henry was troubled by over-mighty subjects, these cousins began to plot against him.

Trouble soon broke out. Some of Henry’s friends who had helped to put him on the throne, quarrelled with him. They were Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland, and Harry Hotspur, his son. The Earl was the Warden of the Marches. That means that it was his duty to watch the northern border of England, and prevent

Scottish raiders from stealing Englishmen's cattle. The border was not everywhere easy to defend. In one place the deep part of the river Tweed made a good border-line ; but further west, where the Cheviot Hills are, it was very easy for Scotsmen to cross into England. Further west still the border was marked by the rivers Liddel and Esk, and in many places it is quite easy to ride across these on horseback, or even wade across on foot.

To help in guarding the border the warden could call on all the lords who lived near it, and they in their turn called upon their tenants. Some of these last were *nag* tenants ; others were *foot* tenants. A *nag* tenant was one who held lands from a lord on condition that he rode on horseback to defend the border against the Scots ; a *foot* tenant held his lands in return for service on foot. At night, when beacons blazed from hilltops, or by day, when messengers rode into the village to say the thieving Scots were at hand, *nag* tenants and *foot* tenants donned their jacks, or jackets strengthened with steel plates, covered their heads with steel caps, seized their spears, and made for the place of muster. He who failed to appear lost his lands. In the summer the Scots were usually too busy at home with farming to invade England. The raiding time lasted from October to March in each year. In these cold months all the bridges and fords were guarded by Englishmen taking the duty in turn ; and it was the business of their lords to leave their warm firesides, and ride through sleet and wind to make sure their men were at their posts. For the Scots were hardy, and chose the vilest weather for their raids.

In the time of Henry the Fourth Scots hated Englishmen bitterly. They remembered the days when Edward I. had ravaged Scotland, and tried to make himself king there. So all Scottish borderers loved to make raids into

England, and brought up all their boys to look forward to the day when they too might ride with their fathers to steal English cattle. Raiders were mounted on good horses, which could endure long journeys with little rest. A French writer describes the Scottish raiders thus : “ The Scots are a bold and hardy race, and much accustomed to war. When they invade England they travel as far as twenty-four leagues by day and night without halting. The knights and squires ride large bay horses ; the common people ride little Galloway ponies. They bring no carts because of the Northumberland hills, which they have to cross ; neither do they carry with them any bread or wine. For in time of war they can live a long time on half-boiled meat, without bread ; and they drink river water without wine. They do not need pots and pans ; they cook their meat in the skins of cattle, and as they find plenty of these in England, they carry none with them. Under his saddle-flaps each man carries a broad iron plate, and behind his saddle a little bag of oatmeal.” On the plate he made his oat cakes. But the English borderers were as hardy as the Scots, and as eager to thieve.

On moonlight nights the raiders of either nation started on their expeditions in companies of forty or fifty, led by men who knew the paths across the bogs and moors. During the daylight they travelled as much as possible out of sight in deep valleys, or halted to rest in some place of hiding where their horses could graze. They rested for only short periods, for they could only steal cattle if they took the owners by surprise. After they had attacked sufficient farmhouses and collected a herd of sheep and cows, they turned homewards. They travelled as fast as the animals permitted. The herd might become hungry, thirsty, tired and

footsore, but the raiders drove them on with spear thrusts, and gave them little or no time to rest or even to drink at the river passages. For at any moment they might catch sight of pursuers crossing hilltops in the rear, or hear the sound of their horses' hoofs galloping through the stony fords of Esk or Liddel.

If the thieves got clear away with the stolen beasts, the rightful owners did not give up all hope of recovering them. Border robbers seemed to think that it was a heavy misfortune for a man to lose his cattle, and that he should have some chance of winning them back. So a custom called the "Hot Tod" grew up. The man who had been robbed came across the border with one or two friends, with blowing horns and barking hounds, to endeavour to track the lost cattle to their new resting place. He blew his horns and let his hounds bay, so that every one might know that he came upon a peaceful errand. The robbers watched him search, and if he found his cattle they suffered him to drive them home. The Hot Tod seems like a game which each side played fairly.

If the cattle could not be found the owners appealed to their warden. On certain days he made a truce with the warden on the other side, and then both wardens and their friends assembled together to settle disputes. Many complaints were made at these meetings by each side against the other. Here is a sample: "Rowie Foster, John Birnie and their neighbours (all Englishmen) complain against Richie Maxwell of Cavens and the soldiers of Langholm (all Scotsmen) that they have stolen 200 cows and oxen and 200 sheep." Men were appointed to try the cases. But even if they decided that such and such men were guilty they could not often make them return the cattle. The borderers were such

fierce and unruly men that neither the English king in London nor the Scottish king in Edinburgh could keep them in order. They loved fighting and cattle stealing as men to-day love to play a football match, and they trusted for protection very little to the warden and the king, and a great deal to their own strength and that of their friends. On each side of the border there were great clans or families.

The Elliots, Armstrongs, Scotts, Maxwells, and Johnstones were Scottish families, and Musgraves, Fosters, Fenwicks, and Grahams were English ones. Each individual looked for help to those of his own name; and every one who could afford to do so built a stronghold.

So all along the borders there were fortified houses, towers, and castles. You can still see many of them if you go to Northumberland, Cumberland, Dumfriesshire, and other border



FIG. 72.—A Fortified Tower on the Borders.

land, Cumberland, Dumfriesshire, and other border counties.

It was very seldom that a year passed in which no English nor Scottish farmhouse was burnt. So the English warden of the Marches was always calling out his knights to ride and fight. Nowhere in England were harder fighters and harder riders to be found. Harry, the earl's son, was called Hotspur because he was always

riding fast on horseback. All the border country was filled with daring men, and the people who live there now still love to boast of the feats of cattle stealing and of war which their ancestors performed. Nowadays they fight no longer. But they are still rivals in football, racing, both on foot and horseback, wrestling, and leaping ; and a Scot always loves to beat an Englishman, and an Englishman a Scot.

The defence of the border, the building and repairing of castles, the piling up of beacons on hilltops, the feeding of horses, the payment of soldiers, and the making and mending of their armour cost much money. Earl Percy and his son received a great deal from King Henry, and asked for more. In 1402, as early as the month of August, when cattle were fat, and corn was getting ripe, an army of Scots poured into England. Englishmen fled from their farms ; Newcastle was terrified. But the warden did his duty ; he attacked the raiders at Homildon Hill, defeated them, and took many prisoners. Some of these were of royal blood, and the Percies hoped to win great ransoms. To their disgust Henry said the Scottish prisoners belonged to him, and gave them no real reward for their victory. The Percies had spent a great deal of money in fighting the Scots, and could get none of it back from Henry. In wrath they rose against him, and joined his enemies in 1403.

At this time the Welsh were in rebellion under Owen Glendower. Wales was then a disorderly country ; its people were not easy to rule, for when they did wrong they fled on swift bare feet to their mountains, where armed English soldiers could not catch them. Englishmen did not dare to live in Wales, except in great stone castles. Glendower was a Welsh landowner. Since the time of Edward I. the oldest son of the English king had

always been called Prince of Wales. But Glendower now claimed the title, and pretended to be descended from ancient Welsh rulers. He hoped to drive the English quite out of the land. He persuaded Sir Edmund Mortimer, uncle of the little Earl of March, to help him ; and the Earl of Northumberland and his son Harry Hotspur joined them. The Percies even made friends with their old enemies the Scots. It was agreed that if Henry was defeated the Earl of March should be made king in his stead. But in a battle at Shrewsbury in 1403 Henry defeated his enemies and killed Harry Hotspur.

Fighting went on for some years. But in 1409 Sir Edmund Mortimer died ; Earl Percy fell in battle in the same year ; Glendower became a homeless fugitive among the Welsh mountains ; and Henry kept the Earl of March and his brother safe in prison. Once in 1405 the sister of Edward, Earl of Rutland, and of Richard, Earl of Cambridge, caused a blacksmith to make false keys, by means of which she entered the bedroom of the Earl of March and his brother at Windsor Castle. She persuaded the boys to flee with her to Owen Glendower. Perhaps the little Earl thought it would be a great adventure to ride away and be made a king. But Henry's men caught him and his brother in a wood at Cheltenham, and ever afterwards the king caused them to be more carefully imprisoned. And he looked with suspicion at the Earls of Rutland and Cambridge, his cousins, for he knew they wished the Earl of March to be king. So in the end Henry triumphed against his over-mighty subjects, and for a while the quarrels between the descendants of Edward III. died out.

As Henry had been made king by Act of Parliament, it was not likely that Parliament would lose power. Henry promised through his ministers that he would be

“counselled and governed not by his own proper will, but by the common advice and consent of the honourable and sage persons of his realm.” That means that he would not govern despotically as Richard tried to do at the end of his reign, but by will of Parliament ; that he would not make laws, nor tax his subjects of his own will like Richard, but only with the consent of their representatives ; and that he would take the advice of good councillors in everything.

Indeed, Parliaments began at this time to be somewhat puffed up with importance. Some members, lawyers most of them, spoke to Henry with insolence. “ You ask us for money,” they said, “ when you are extravagantly giving away lands and revenues to friends. What has happened to all King Richard’s jewels ? Your queen has a lot of foreign friends staying with her ; your palaces at Westminster, Windsor, and the Tower are filled with mobs of rascal servants. Your garrison at Calais is made up of sailors and boys who cannot ride. If you want money from us, you must cut down your personal expenses by one-half. And the money given is to be spent only on the defence of the realm, and is to be held and given out by treasurers appointed by Parliament. We cannot trust you with it. When we meet again we shall examine the treasurers’ accounts.” It is not surprising to read that, in 1404, when Henry needed more money and ordered another Parliament to assemble, he gave instructions to the sheriffs that no lawyers were to be elected. But even the “ unlearned Parliament,” as this one was called, talked incessantly about royal extravagance.

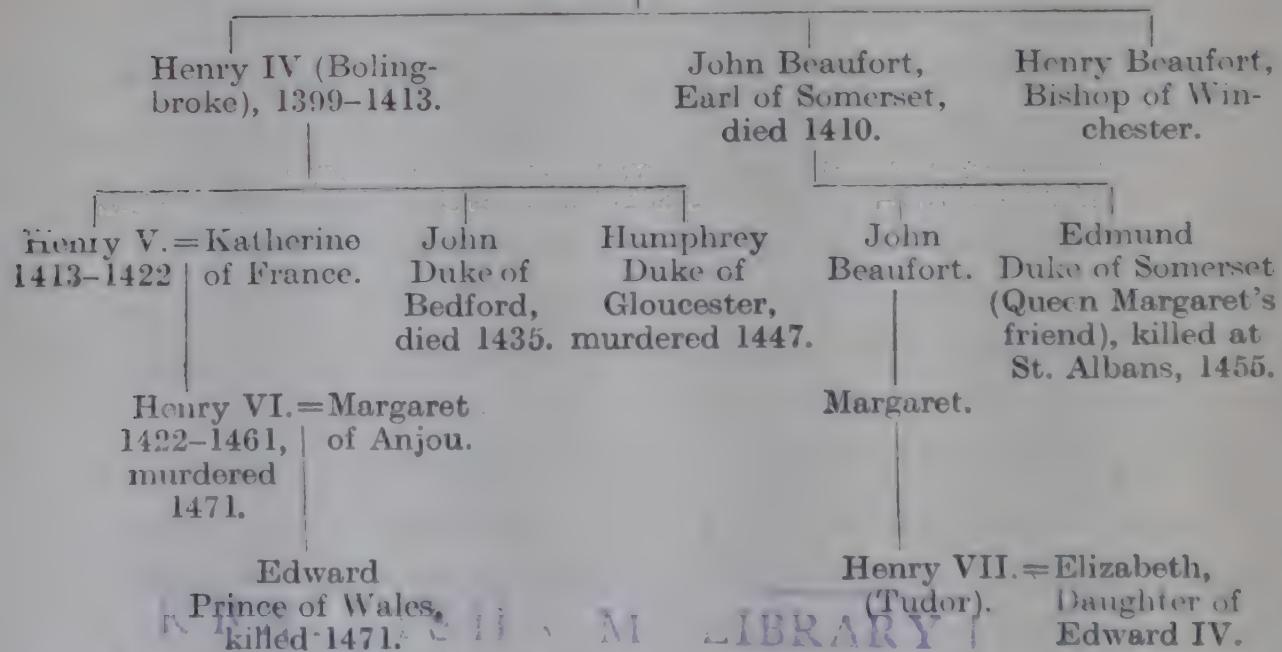
Henry’s patience under his difficulties was great. He sent away the gentlemen who waited on his person, and even his father confessor, and humbly said he would

send away others if his people wished it. His extreme meekness in dismissing at Parliament's bidding all except three of the queen's foreign servants so pleased Parliament that it gave permission to him to retain a greater number than it had first allowed. He chose his ministers as Parliament wished, and even included among them the member of Parliament whose long speeches he hated most. And when Parliament demanded that the accounts of expenditure should be laid before it, he agreed. So Henry was careful to do what Richard had disliked to do. He reigned until his death in 1413.

HOUSE OF LANCASTER.

EDWARD III.

John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, died 1399.



No. 1337...

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CHAPTER XXVII.—HENRY V. AND HIS GREAT VICTORY IN FRANCE*

HENRY V., son of Henry IV., was born in 1387. As a little boy he saw very little of his father. He must have grown up in the care of servants at some of the many houses of his grandfather, John of Gaunt. People began to talk about finding a wife for him in 1395, when he was only eight years old. It costs money to bring boys up, and Henry's guardians kept careful accounts of what they spent on his soap, shoes, straw hats, scarlet caps, and green mantles. In 1396 they spent four shillings on grammar books for him, so his education had certainly begun. Perhaps his old grandfather took a friendly interest in it. In 1397 the boy got a new scabbard for his sword at the cost of one shilling.

When Richard II. banished the boy's father from the realm, he kept the boy beside him, and gave him £500 a year to keep him. Apparently he loved him. He often prophesied that he would do great things. When Henry Bolingbroke came back to England to claim his father's lands and to raise a rebellion against Richard, the king none the less treated little Henry kindly.

After Henry Bolingbroke had been crowned, his son became Prince of Wales at the age of twelve. Next year he went to Wales to learn to be a soldier by fighting against Owen Glendower, who also called himself Prince

* See P. P. Hists., Sen. Bk. I., Part III., Chap. VI.

of Wales. As he grew up he was allowed to help in chasing the fleet-footed Welshmen over hills and valleys. Harry Hotspur before he turned traitor was his soldier schoolmaster. The King could get very little money from Parliament for the war, so young Henry was not very successful. In 1403, as a boy of sixteen, he was present at the battle of Shrewsbury. But in 1408 he left Wales. Glendower by that time was beaten.

Henry grew up a tall man. He had an open boyish face, a straight long nose, red cheeks, and brown hair. He was fond of sports of all kinds. At jumping few could beat him. His feet were as swift as those of a deer. He could write and speak English and French, was fond of music, and loved to read good stories and books on hunting. There are reports that he was a wild young man.

When he became King in 1413, the old quarrels between the descendants of Edward III. seemed to have ended. Edmund, Earl of March, was very fond of the King, and had no desire to take his place. Henry trusted him, and let him go free. Edward, once Earl of Rutland and now Duke of York, had fought well in Wales, and was no longer suspected of plotting.

Henry was eager to begin war with France and to recover all the lands which Edward III. had won and lost. France at this time was not well governed. Her king was a lunatic. He went about biting his nails and pulling his hair. He would allow no one to wash him; it took ten men to compel him to change his clothes. So the Dauphin, his oldest son, governed in his stead. He could not keep the French lords in order. The greatest of these were the Duke of Burgundy and the Duke of Orleans.

The Duke of Burgundy's lands were in North and

East France.* The great cities of Flanders, in which English wool was spun and woven, were his. Because his subjects could only make a living with English help, he was willing to be friendly with Henry. The Duke of Orleans' lands and friends were in the sunny south of France, where the vineyards were. Men in the south made their living by tilling the soil, and not by working in spinning and weaving shops as in the north.

These two nobles often quarrelled together. Frequently their little armies fought in the streets of Paris. Swords clashed and archers climbed on to roofs that they might shoot at the passers-by below. Their soldiers stole all the corn and cattle, hens and chickens in the surrounding country. When the tax-gatherer came round he found nothing to seize except a few pots and pans and straw beds. The peasants were so starved that many had scarcely strength to guide a plough. At last Burgundy made a plot to murder Orleans. Burgundian soldiers hid themselves in an empty house whence they might rush out and kill their enemy as he went along the street to visit the king. It was in November; a great frost was beginning, which was to last till February. So Orleans was wrapped in a furred cloak as he rode along. He was singing little snatches of song. Suddenly the waiting men dashed out of the house, dragged him from his mule, and stabbed him again and again. His son became Duke of Orleans in his place. The two greatest nobles in France could never be friends after this murder. They and their armies always fought against one another.

The condition of France pleased Henry IV. and Henry V. The latter told the French that unless they restored all the lands which Edward III. had conquered,

* See Map, p. 262.

and also all the other lands which Henry II. had possessed, he would go to war against them. The silly Dauphin answered by sending Henry a present of some tennis-balls. He intended to show by this that the English King was only fit for games. So in 1415 Henry began preparations.

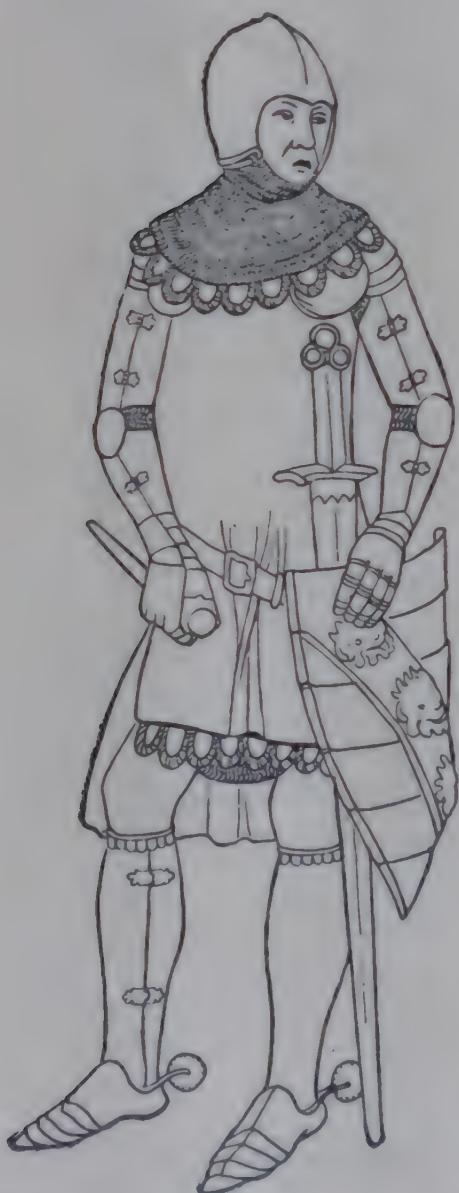


FIG. 73.—Knight in Henry the Fifth's Time.

He sent word to his tent-maker, bow-maker, chief transport officer, chief shoeing smith, and surgeon to be ready. Sheriffs were ordered to collect oxen to pull the carts of the army. Money was raised by pawning the royal jewels and by getting loans from towns. London gave about £7000. The famous Dick Whittington, the wealthy cloth merchant, who had been Mayor of London, lent the King about £500, and we still have a royal letter in which Henry explained how the money was to be repaid.

Then Henry began to collect soldiers. Edward the Third's way of doing so was still used. Noblemen and knights made agreements with the King to enlist a company of men-at-arms and archers in return for a sum of money. The nobleman or knight then commanded the

company, and fitted it out with spears, arrows, bows, and other things. A man-at-arms was paid one shilling a day and an archer sixpence. The men-at-arms were covered with heavy plate armour, and carried swords

and spears or halberds. A halberd was a combination of spear and axe; its handle was five to seven feet long. The archer usually wore a steel cap and a padded or stuffed jacket. Sometimes he had a coat of mail. At his belt he carried a sword or axe. The victories of the archers at Crecy and Poitiers were well remembered in England. Consequently English servants and labourers were compelled by law to have bows and arrows, and to practise with them on Sundays and holidays instead of wasting time at football, quoits, skittles, and gambling. Yew staves for the bows were imported from the Continent.

Great quantities of weapons and stores had to be collected. Cannon were much used, so powder and stone balls had to be made ready and carts to carry them in, oxen to pull the carts, harness for the oxen, axes for cutting wood, spades and picks for digging trenches, bows, sheaves of arrows, and hundreds of thousands of goose feathers for the arrows, food for men, oxen, and horses.

In July, 1415, when all these preparations were afoot, suddenly Henry heard of a conspiracy against him. His friend the Earl of March came to him and explained that the Earl of Cambridge, who was brother to the Duke of York and grandson to Edward III., had been trying to persuade him to rebel against Henry and make

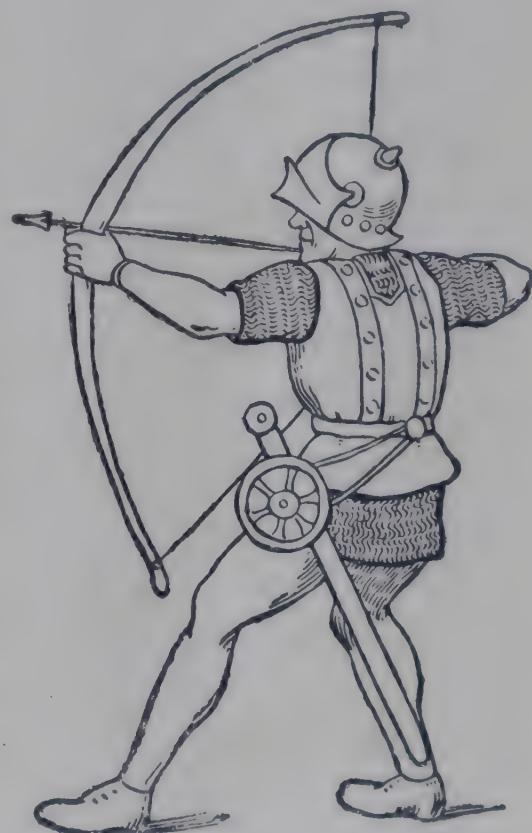


FIG. 74.—Archer of the Time of Henry V.

himself king. Other nobles had joined the Earl of Cambridge. The rebels were all executed. Henry still remained friendly to the Duke of York and the Earl of March. But he had learned that the old quarrels among Edward the Third's descendants were not yet ended.

In August Henry sailed with about 12,000 men and 1500 ships of various sizes. This number of ships was needed to carry the horses, cannon, and food, forage and weapons. After a voyage of rather more than two days he reached Harfleur at the mouth of the river Seine. He besieged the town for five weeks. His guns, called by names like "London" or "Messenger" or "King's Daughter," battered holes in the wall, till the courage of the garrison fell, and its commander surrendered.

By this time many hundreds of Henry's soldiers were dead or sick. He sent all the latter home by ships, and then, to show the French that he was not afraid of them, he started to march to Calais with a small army of 5000 archers and 1000 spearmen, intending to cross from Calais to England. He had calculated that the journey would take eight days, for he thought he had only 100 miles to go. So he took food for eight days only. But he was forced to go a long way round in order to get over the River Somme, for many of the bridges had been broken down by the enemy; and so the journey lengthened to more than 300 miles, and took three weeks. The food was soon finished. Heavy rains began to fall; good fires could not be lit for cooking meals; raw or half-cooked meat and nuts were almost the only food. But no one was allowed to thieve. Henry was not like the Black Prince. He hoped to win the love of the French country folk by treating them well. So plundering soldiers were put to death.

Word now came that the French army of 20,000 was

close at hand. They were all followers of the Duke of Orleans. The Duke of Burgundy kept all his men at home. The French soldiers were all on horseback, and well covered with armour like feudal knights. Some French prisoners gave word that the French intended to ride down the English archers and trample them under their horses' feet. So Henry ordered his archers to cut shafts of wood six feet long, and sharpen them at both ends. He intended that they should thrust one end firmly into the ground in such a way that the other sharp end was pointing outwards towards the enemy. The archers would thus have a prickly hedge to protect them.

At last near Agincourt, the weary, wet, fever-stricken English found the French army blocking their way to Calais. Then an English knight wished aloud for 10,000 of the archers that were at home in England. Henry rebuked him, saying, "By the God of heaven, by Whose grace I stand, and in Whom I put my trust, I would not have another man if I could. Knowest thou not that the Lord with these few can overthrow the pride of the French ?"

Down on the soft, wet ground the army dropped for its night's rest. It lay upon the open fields of three French villages, one of which was called Agincourt. To the right and left of them were woods ; in front of them between the same woods lay the French soldiers ; many of them sat on their horses in preference to lying on the wet soil, others careless of any consequences lay anywhere in their armour.

Every one in the English army, including the King himself, fought on foot. The line of battle was formed in the usual English way. The men-at-arms with their spears were drawn up in three battalions four deep, and

facing the enemy. In the spaces between the battalions and at the two ends of the whole line Henry placed his archers. They fought upon their bare feet in order that they might move more easily upon the miry ground. In front of them they drove their stakes firmly into the ground.

Behind the army Henry placed his horses, carts, and baggage, with a small force to protect them. There his private chaplain sat upon his horse with the other army priests, praying with all his might that England might win the battle.

In front were the French. The space between the woods was so narrow for them that they had to form their men into three great battalions, one behind the other. The men of the first two battalions were on foot. Every one of them was in heavy armour, such as steel breastplates, helmets, steel leggings, and steel gloves. They sank into the soft soil up to their ankles and calves, and were so tightly jammed together that they could not use their spears.

When all was ready Henry led his men on. Above his helmet he wore a golden crown adorned with rubies, sapphires, and pearls. His account-books say it was worth £679 5s. When the English came within shooting distance of the enemy, Henry ordered them to halt. Once more the archers drove their stakes into the ground, and then they cheered, “Hurrah! Hurrah! Saint George and Merry England.” The French were astonished to hear cheering from men who, they thought, were certain to be beaten.

Then the first French battalion advanced. The ground had been newly ploughed, and was soft with rain, so that they moved slowly and with difficulty. The English archers shot their arrows fast into the crowded

French battalion, until huge piles of dead and wounded lay on the ground. Then they slung their bows about their necks, drew their swords and axes, and stepped out from between their stakes. On their bare feet they could move quickly. They hacked and hewed at the French spearmen as though they were a solid mass. The enemy were helpless ; those behind would not let them retreat ; those in the centre could not move ; those in front had no room to fight. Soon the wall of dead Frenchmen was five feet high.

But behind this French attack there lay another body of French soldiery as great as the first. Henry led his men immediately against this. Here the fighting was furious. Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, the king's brother, was felled to the ground ; over him Henry fought at risk of his own life. His helmet crest was lopped off, and part of the crown was hacked away. At last this French line gave way also, and then another large body lying still further to the rear turned and fled at a time when a gallant charge on horseback (for this division alone of all the French army had retained their horses) might have completely destroyed the weary and disordered English line. In all less than 120 Englishmen fell ; but the French lost over 6000, and many of these belonged to the highest families of France.

The English army struggled on to Calais and reached it four days after the battle. A fortnight later Henry crossed to Dover, and on November 23 entered London. With sober unmoved countenance he rode through the mobs of rejoicing citizens that filled the decorated streets.

* * * * *

Between 1415 and 1422 the English captured all Normandy. The French could not resist, for they were



FIG. 75.—English Possessions in France in early years of Henry VI.

fighting among themselves in Paris, while the English were taking town after town. The Duke of Burgundy had the insane king Charles in his possession. The Orleans' party sided with the Dauphin.

At last even Burgundy thought peace should be made with the Dauphin and his friends, in order that the English conquest might be checked. He met the prince on a bridge and knelt before him. Suddenly he was slain by the prince's friends.

His son Philip became duke in his place, and made a firm friendship with the English. Henry, with Philip's help, made a treaty at Troyes with the French king. Henry became Regent of France, married Katherine, a French princess, and was promised the crown when the French king died.

In this way the English conquered all the north of France. Henry was preparing to conquer the southern part from the Dauphin and the Duke of Orleans, when he died on August 31, 1422. His son, Henry VI., was only nine months old. Soon the insane French king died also, and Englishmen regarded baby Henry as King of England and France.

CHAPTER XXVIII.—HOW JEANNE D'ARC DEFEATED THE ENGLISH *

By the deaths of Henry V. and Charles of France, an infant, less than a year old, became King of England and France. Henry on his deathbed named his brother John, Duke of Bedford, as regent of France. In England another brother, Humphrey Duke of Gloucester, became president of the council which carried on the government.

For six years things went well for the English in France. Bedford was a soldier well fitted to take his brother's place; he maintained the alliance with Burgundy, and conquered more French land from the Dauphin, who now called himself King of France. Practically all France north of the great river Loire was in English hands. It was Bedford's object to deprive the Dauphin of southern France as well. And for a time he seemed likely to succeed. His brother Henry's great success at Agincourt and other English victories won in 1423 and 1424 so cowed the French soldiers, that even a great army of them scarcely dared to face a small English one in battle.

The French leader, the Dauphin, had given up all attempts to resist his enemies. Men said that he was afraid, because he had treacherously helped to murder the old Duke of Burgundy in 1419. He was no warrior, but a coward. Although all the wealthy land of southern

* See P. P. Hists., Jun. Bk. III., Story of Joan the Maid.

France was his, he was always in want of money. It is said that he owed money to his butcher, his cooks, his footmen, and his fishmonger. The taxes which his soldiers collected from his unhappy subjects were stolen by his nobles. His courage fell so low that he even thought of retiring to Spain or Scotland.

The condition of France was desperate. Much land, which had once grown crops, now lay fallow ; shops were shut ; merchants with their wares were rarely seen on the roads. The miserable peasants, who still managed to live, crept from their hiding-holes to plough by night, lest plunderers should catch sight of their horses and carry them off. Any brutal noble, who was fighting against another noble, thought nothing of setting fire to a peasant's corn stacks, that he might have light in which to see his way at night. The very boys on different sides met to fight with fists and knives and sticks. Those hamlets that still had crops and cattle, posted men to keep a continual watch from church towers or hill tops. By day the watchers gazed anxiously for the clouds of dust, which showed the presence of marching bands of plunderers ; by night they quaked to see the flames which devoured neighbouring villages. At a warning church bells clanged out a startled peel, which brought peasants from their work or their beds to bring cattle or furniture into some place of hiding or defence.

In 1428 the English decided to attack Orleans, a city lying on the north bank of the Loire, and having a population of 15,000. Its defences were strong. It had a wall six feet thick and eighteen to thirty-three feet high. Outside was a ditch. At intervals the wall was strengthened by towers. On the south side was the bridge over the Loire ; it was lined on each side with houses like Old London Bridge. At its southern end was a fortress. The

citizens who did military duty on the city walls, looked down to the north on the great forest of Orleans, the home of wood-cutters, charcoal burners, and many wolves ; to the south, on the Loire moving lazily between islands



FIG. 76.—An Old Picture of Soldiers plundering a French Town.

and through reedy beds, and farther south still on rich vineyards which produced famous wine.

Attack had been expected for some years, therefore great store of military supplies had been brought into the city, and nearly a hundred guns had been mounted to defend the walls. Stones were quarried to serve as cannon balls ; supplies of lead and powder were laid up ; great

numbers of arrows, darts, and cross-bow shafts were manufactured every day. Wine, corn, and cattle were bought, in case the city might be besieged. Special prayers and offerings of candles were made in churches. Processions were formed to sing praises to God and ask for his help. Appeals were also sent out to all soldier-adventurers to come and lend their aid against the English. Thus some 4000 rather unruly fighters were attracted to the city.

Then on October 12, 1428, appeared the English army of 4000 or 5000 men under the Earl of Salisbury. They were all on horseback, and had a great train of bullock carts carrying barrels of powder, bows, arrows, cannon and cannon-balls, and all kinds of guns. By October 24 they had seized the fort which defended the southern end of the bridge. But they won no more successes. Salisbury was killed by a cannon shot, and his successor in command, the Earl of Suffolk, found it quite impossible to surround the town with his small number of troops. So the citizens pounded away hopefully with cannon-balls at the English, and the English fired back; by Christmas time little damage had been done. In that season of goodwill hostilities ceased. The English, desiring to celebrate the Feast with carol singing, as was their custom at home, sent a request to the leaders of the city for musicians to come forth, and give them music on clarions and trumpets. So the French in good fellowship sent out their musicians to the fort on the bridge, which the English had captured, and the citizens crowded at their own northern end to listen to the melodies.

But as soon as Christmas was over fighting began again. Supplies of powder and hundreds of fat pigs and sheep kept coming into the town, for the English were not numerous enough to surround it completely. The

English starved in the wooden huts they had built to protect them from the snow and the rain. They constantly went to the vineyards, and cut down the vines for firewood. Presently the season of Lent arrived, during which good Catholics eat fish and no meat. A soldier called Sir John Fastolf was bringing 300 cartloads of supplies and great store of herrings to the English army. Suddenly he was attacked by soldiers from Orleans who had heard of his approach. But the English fought well and the French leaders were cowards. So the herrings were saved to be toasted on spear points round English camp fires. This fight was called the Battle of the Herrings.

This defeat and the slothfulness of the Dauphin so lowered the spirits of the citizens, that they were beginning to think of surrendering to the Duke of Burgundy, when a strange rumour revived their frightened hearts. It was said that a girl had appeared in eastern France saying that God had sent her to end the siege, and take the Dauphin to be crowned where all French kings were crowned, at Reims. The name of the girl was Jeanne d'Arc.

Jeanne was born in 1410 or 1412 in the village of Domremy on the eastern borders of France, 450 miles distant from Orleans. Her father, Jacques d'Arc, was a small farmer. Her girlhood was spent like that of other village girls in tending the cattle and horses of the villagers as they fed at grass, in digging and weeding, and in learning to spin with the distaff, and sew. Like the rest of the people of the time, she had faith in fairies that haunted woods and springs, and she believed that God watched over everything, and sent his angels to carry messages to men.

When Jeanne was about thirteen she began to have

visions. She thought St. Michael and the Saints Catherine and Margaret appeared to her and spoke to her, bidding her leave her village and go to the Dauphin. From that time she gave up playing with the other children, and began to go to church every day to hear Mass and to pray. Constantly the saints appeared, bidding her to leave her village, but always she said to herself, "I am a poor girl, and know neither how to ride a horse nor to make war." At last in May, 1428, Jeanne could resist no longer. She went to a noble of her neighbourhood, and begged him to send a message from her to the Dauphin. The noble bade the friends who brought her to whip her well, and take her home to her father. But in February, 1429, about the time of the Battle of the Herrings, she went to the noble again, and this time begged for soldiers to take her to the Dauphin, 450 miles away. "In God's name," she said, "you are too slow in sending me; for this day near Orleans a great disaster has befallen the gentle Dauphin, and worse fortune he will have unless you send me to him." When news of the Battle of the Herrings came, the noble began to think this girl of seventeen or nineteen was a prophetess, and before the end of the month he sent her clad in boy's clothes and on horseback to Chinon, where the Dauphin was. She and her escort rode by night, for their way lay through lands filled with English soldiers, and on March 6, after eleven days of riding, reached Chinon. When brought into the hall where the Dauphin was standing among 300 knights, she went straight up to him, though she had never seen him before. "Most noble Lord Dauphin," she said, "I come from God to help you and your realm." She promised to end the siege of Orleans and lead him to Reims for his coronation. The Dauphin believed, and bade his armourers make her a

suit of mail. It consisted of a helmet, a breastplate, shoulder and arm pieces, gloves, leg guards, and shoes. A horse from the royal stables was given her. On April 29, in full armour, she entered Orleans from the eastern side where the English could not prevent her. Round her pressed the citizens carrying torches—for it was night—and rejoicing in the belief that help had come at last from God. The English who had heard of Jeanne's presence said she was a witch from the devil, and threatened to burn her if they caught her.

On May 3 the French attacked an English fort which lay some distance to the east of the town, and captured it. On May 6 they crossed to the south bank, and assaulted a fort which the English had erected a little way from the southern end of the bridge. Jeanne herself on horseback led the attack, shouting, "Forward in God's name." In the evening she went home weary and wounded in the foot. Although it was a Friday, on which day she always fasted, her faintness compelled her to eat. On May 7 she led her forces to attack the very tower at the bridge end which Salisbury had taken at the commencement of the siege. From early in the morning till nightfall the fight continued. Jeanne herself helped to place a scaling ladder against the English walls, but while she was attempting to climb it an arrow pierced her shoulder, and stood out four inches behind. She had to withdraw from the fray to have her armour taken off, the weapon extracted, and the wound dressed. She wept with pain, and became frightened. Her men became weary as darkness fell, and began to retire.

But her courage returned. She put on her armour once more, and returned to the scene of the fight. She found the trumpets giving the signal to retreat. Aloud she cried, "You will enter the fortress soon. Have no

fear, the English will not resist you more. Rest a little ; eat and drink." While her men refreshed themselves she called for her horse, mounted, and rode away to pray by herself. In her absence one of the French nobles went up to her standard-bearer and said, "If I advance against the fortress will you follow ?" The man said, "Yes." At once the noble leapt into the ditch which surrounded the fortress, and began to climb the wall. The standard-bearer followed him. At this moment Jeanne returned, saw her flag, and called to her soldiers, "Enter the fort, all is yours." Her men then rushed into the ditch and over the defences of the fort in such numbers that the defenders turned and fled. Jeanne had won the day.

Next morning, May 8, the rest of the English army at Suffolk's command left its camp before the walls, and marched away. Jeanne had ended the siege. In a few days she bade farewell to the rejoicing citizens, and rode away to the Dauphin. As she rode she met him. She took off her cap and bowed to the neck of her horse ; he also took his hat off. She still talked of taking him to Reims to be crowned as king. Much fighting had to be done before that was possible. But the French continued to win victories. The English thought Jeanne was a witch. The Duke of Bedford called her "a limb of the Fiend," and said that she used enchantments and sorcery. On July 16 the Dauphin entered Reims and was crowned. Jeanne stood by the altar of the cathedral, and held her flag in her hand while the coronation took place. She had done what she set out to do.

But she continued to fight. In 1430, however, the men of the Duke of Burgundy captured her in a battle. Her soldiers were surrounded. She fought on horseback like a hero, until an archer seized her by the leg and threw

her from her horse. Then the Duke sold her to the English for 10,000 francs, about £400. The Duke of Bedford caused her to be tried by a court of learned men and clergymen who were all French. For three months the trial went on. She was charged with being a witch. The saints who had appeared to her, and had spoken



FIG. 77.

An old picture of the Castle of Rouen, where Jeanne was imprisoned. Only one small tower is now left standing.

to her, were said by her judges to be the Devil appearing in the form of saints. At the end of the trial she was condemned to be burnt. On May 29, 1431, she was burned at the stake in the market-place of Rouen, and her ashes were cast into the Seine. The French King never tried to help the girl who had done so much for him. His cowardice has disgraced him for ever. Englishmen now think with shame of their ancestors' cruelty.

But Englishmen and Frenchmen both honour Jeanne to-day, for she did a great thing. When all the rulers and soldiers of France were afraid, she took away their fear, and gave them courage. Although she was only a young peasant girl she could do this, for she was the bravest woman in the world. To this day the people of Orleans hold a procession through the streets in her honour, whenever the anniversary of the saving of the city comes round ; and in many a town of France the traveller can see statues to her memory.

CHAPTER XXIX.—HENRY VI. AND THE WARS BETWEEN THE HOUSES OF LANCASTER AND YORK *

HENRY VI. was King when Jeanne d'Arc was helping the French to defeat the English. He became King in 1422, when he was nine months old. His cousins, uncles, and other relatives were numerous. One uncle, John Duke of Bedford, became governor of France. Another, Humphrey Duke of Gloucester, acted as president of a council of nobles at home. Whenever orders had to be given for the government of England it was this council which gave them. Henry VI. was a great grandson of John of Gaunt ; so he was a relation of all that man's descendants.† Among them were the Beauforts. Henry and all John of Gaunt's descendants were called Lancastrians, because John had been Duke of Lancaster.

But John of Gaunt had some brothers.‡ There was Lionel. He came next after the Black Prince, and some people said that his descendant, little Edmund, Earl of March, should have been King instead of Henry IV. Another brother of John was Edmund Duke of York. His descendant, Richard of Cambridge, had tried to make the Earl of March King, and Richard had married Anne who was sister to the Earl of March. Her son, another Richard, was Duke of York in Henry the

* See P. P. Hists. :—

Jun. Bk. IV., Chap. XXV.

Sen. Bk. I., Part III., Margaret of Anjou.

† See Table on p. 252. ‡ See Table on p. 243.

Sixth's time. Soon his uncle, the Earl of March, died, and Richard inherited his claim to the throne. But people thought the old quarrels between Edward the Third's descendants were over.

While the great lords of the council governed, Henry grew up. His nurse's name was Joan, and her wages were £40 a year. Forty pounds in those days would buy more than £500 in 1914. So Joan received very high pay. When Henry needed a whipping a lady of higher rank than Joan was called in. At the age of four he evidently began to wish for playmates; for the council ordered that all the barons of the realm, who were still children, should be brought to court and live beside the king. Each one was to have a tutor given to him at the expense of the country.

In 1428 it was thought high time to give the king a man guardian. The Earl of Warwick was chosen. He was to teach the king to love, worship, and dread God, to encourage him to love virtue and avoid vice, to instruct him in literature, language, and other kinds of knowledge. Orders were given to the Earl to whip Henry if he thought fit. If ever a pestilence broke out near the king's residence the Earl was to hurry him off to some place of safety.

In 1429 the boy was crowned King of England. He was dressed in scarlet cloth trimmed with fur, and his guardian carried him in his arms from Westminster Palace, where he lived, to Westminster Abbey, where the crowning was to take place. Then he was led up on to a high platform in the abbey, and placed in a seat in the middle of it. From his seat the little boy is said to have looked about him "sadly and wisely." Then the long coronation ceremony began. The Archbishop of Canterbury asked the congregation whether they

would have this Henry, King Henry the Fifth's son, to rule over them. And the people cried with one voice, "Yea ! Yea !" The king then lay down on his face before the altar, and the archbishops and bishops stood round him, and sang anthems. After this they stripped him to his shirt, and the archbishop anointed him. When he had put on another scarlet gown he was crowned with Edward the Confessor's crown. The ceremony is too long to read about in full.

After it was all over a great banquet was held in Westminster Hall. Sir Philip Dymocke rode on horseback into the Hall. He was dressed in full armour. Every king in those days had a champion to fight his quarrels. Sir Philip was Henry's champion. So, sitting on his horse, he cried out aloud to all at the banquet that Henry was rightful King of England ; as he cried out he cast his glove on the floor of the Hall. Any one who denied that Henry was rightful king, and wished to fight about it, was supposed to pick up Sir Philip's glove. Then the next day there would have been a tournament between Sir Philip the champion and the man who took up the glove. No one, however, came forward to say that Henry was not the real king ; no one picked up the glove. But perhaps many thought quietly that some one else should have been crowned in Henry's place.

In December, 1430, Henry was crowned King of France in Paris. All these important ceremonies and the great respect every one showed made Henry think that the Earl of Warwick ought to whip him no more. His friends told him he ought not to submit. So in 1432 the Earl was told by the Council to take away these friends from the king, and whip him if necessary. The Council also went to him and told him to obey the Earl. Apparently Henry had been behaving badly, and saying

that he was grown up and able to govern. Two years later, in 1434, they had to tell him the same thing. In the same year we read that the king was given some little swords and a suit of armour, in order that his guardian might instruct him in warlike exercises. But he never became a soldier like his father.

Henry was not a very clever boy ; but he was an honest one. He knew French and Latin, and was very fond of reading the Bible and history books. It was the fashion in his day for wealthy men to found schools and colleges. So Henry, when he was nineteen or twenty, began to build a school at Eton and a College, still called King's College, at Cambridge. He constantly gave gifts of lands to the school and the College. The teachers were chosen carefully. Henry said he could put up with teachers, who knew only a little music, if they were proficient in a knowledge of the Scriptures. He liked to talk to the Eton boys, when they came to his castle of Windsor to see their friends among the royal servants. They received small sums of money from him and much good advice. "Be good, polite, and obedient boys," he used to say.

He went regularly to church. Oaths were never heard on his lips. In this he was very different from other English kings. Almost his only exclamations were "Forsooth" and "Fie for shame." He dressed very plainly. His shoes were round at the toes like a farmer's, and not long and pointed according to the fashion. Bright and showy colours were distasteful to him. Once he gave his royal robes away to an abbot because they were so fine. He could not endure horrid sights. Once when he was entering London by Cripplegate he saw part of a human body above the gate. It was part of a traitor who had been hung, drawn, and quartered. Henry ordered it to

be taken down. He was much too gentle for his time. At an age when his father had fought against Owen Glendower in Wales, and the Black Prince had won his spurs at Crecy, Henry VI. was still in the nursery. Boys to-day would think him a milksop ; and he remained a bit of a milksop till he died.

As Henry grew up his soldiers were being driven out of France. Jeanne d'Arc took a great deal of land from them. John Duke of Bedford died in 1435. In the same year the Duke of Burgundy deserted the English ; Henry wept when he heard of it. Some English nobles began to desire peace very much. Chief among these were Henry's relations, the Beauforts ; one Beaufort was Bishop of Winchester and another was Duke of Somerset. These peaceful men were opposed by Richard Duke of York. In 1444, however, the peace party triumphed. A truce was made with France, and Henry married Margaret of Anjou, the French queen's niece. Henry gave up the French province of Maine, but retained Normandy and Guienne, all that was left of the great English possessions.

The Duke of York and his friends were angry about other things besides the war in France. Henry's friends did not keep order in England. It is the duty of a king's minister to protect the weak against the strong, and to keep the land in peace, so that men and women can do their work without fear of being killed or wounded or robbed. A king's minister should see that good courts of justice are kept up, and that judges and juries are able to give fair sentences and verdicts without being threatened by violent men.

But in Henry the Sixth's time all this was very difficult to do. Great lords kept little standing armies of soldiers, every one of whom had a badge or a cap

or a sash. They called these men retainers ; they were hired men who in return for wages promised to defend their master in all quarrels. Many of them were soldiers, who had returned from France, where they had learned rough habits of slaughter and pillage. Such men quickly spent their pay and all the money they had got by selling their booty, and so were soon glad to join the little army of some lord. They slept at night in their master's great hall on heaps of straw laid down for them. In the daytime they feasted at his expense. We read of one noble who daily fed 300 retainers ; of another who put in the field against his enemy a little army of 4000 foot soldiers and 800 horsemen—almost as large a force as Henry V. had at Agincourt. To feed such a number of servants many bakers and cooks were necessary, many quarters of flour, and oxen and sheep by the dozen. Each retainer claimed an allowance of a gallon of beer a day.

When nobles had armies like this, Henry and his ministers could not keep them in order. Everywhere there were little wars going on. Wealthy heiresses and widows were wakened at night by the sound of breaking doors and by the trampling feet of soldiers, who carried them off, and married them against their will for the sake of their wealth. Men, women, and children were slain ; clergymen were seized and held to ransom ; churches were stripped of their precious cups and candlesticks and clothes. Landowners who had many retainers attacked those who had few, seized their castles, threw out their furniture, and carried off doors, hinges, glass, lead, pots



(1)



(2)

FIG. 78.—Retainers' Badges.

(1) Bear and Ragged Staff worn by Warwick's retainers ; (2) Hound worn by Talbot's retainers.

and pans, and plunder of the French wars. Then the tenants of the unhappy landowner found new rent-collectors knocking at their doors for rent, and threatening them with murder, if they paid rents to the old owner's officers. When friends of the rival lords met

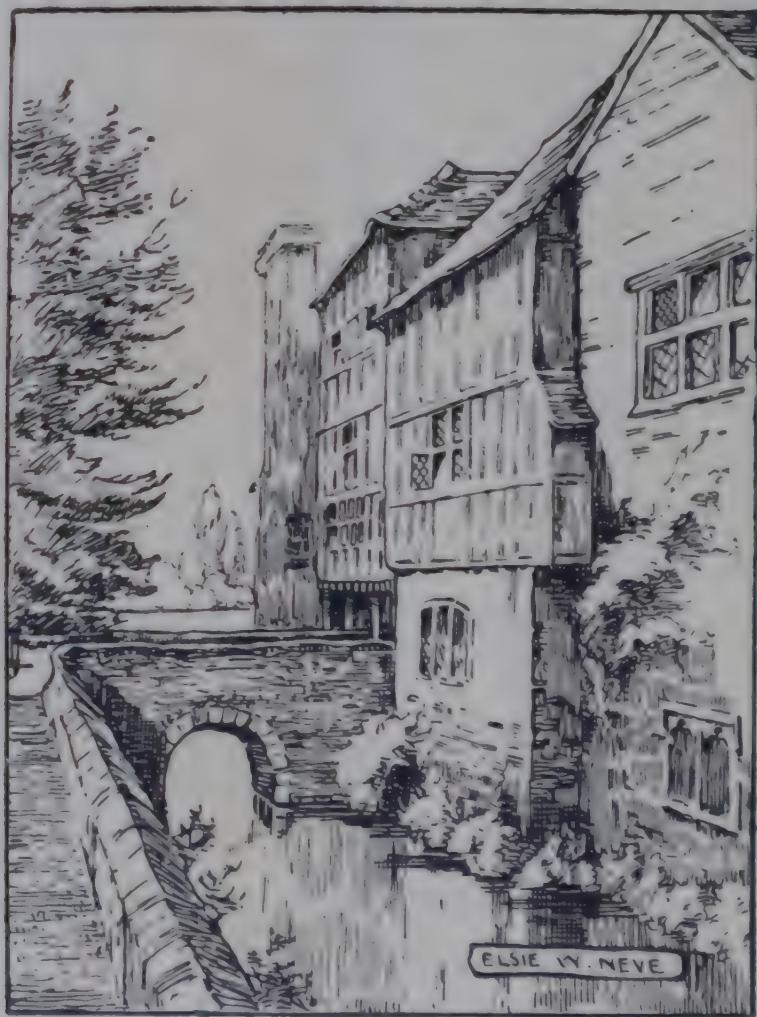


FIG. 79.—A Fortified Manor House.
Ightham Moat, Kent, as it is even at the present day.

they drew swords and fought, and it was a common thing for one party to post notices saying that any of their enemies found in the neighbourhood would have their skulls cracked at once. If the robbed man was daring enough to appeal to the sheriff, and accuse his enemy before the justices, then on the court day the county town was filled by the wicked lord's retainers. They marched shouting and singing along the narrow streets, chased honest

citizens out of their way, and pursued and killed their rivals as if this were a holiday pastime. They drank beer without paying in any ale house or hostelry that happened to be open. When the trial began in the court, the judge and jury were horrified to see the place packed with retainers laughing and jeering and shaking their sharp weapons in the face of peaceful men. Justice was a mockery, for no jury dared to bring in an honest verdict, and no judge dared to give sentence for fear of what might happen to them later on. The judge feared that his head might be cracked by a blow as he travelled on the following day to the next county town. And the jurors thought they might wake some night to find that retainers had set fire to their barns. So the jurors brought in a verdict of not guilty, and the judge declared the accused lord innocent. Even if the judge and jury dared to say an accused lord was guilty, no one dared to march up to his castle and drag him off to prison.

All through England men were demanding good government, and demanding it in vain. Of course the party which blamed Somerset for the defeats in



FIG. 80.—A very Old Street in York.

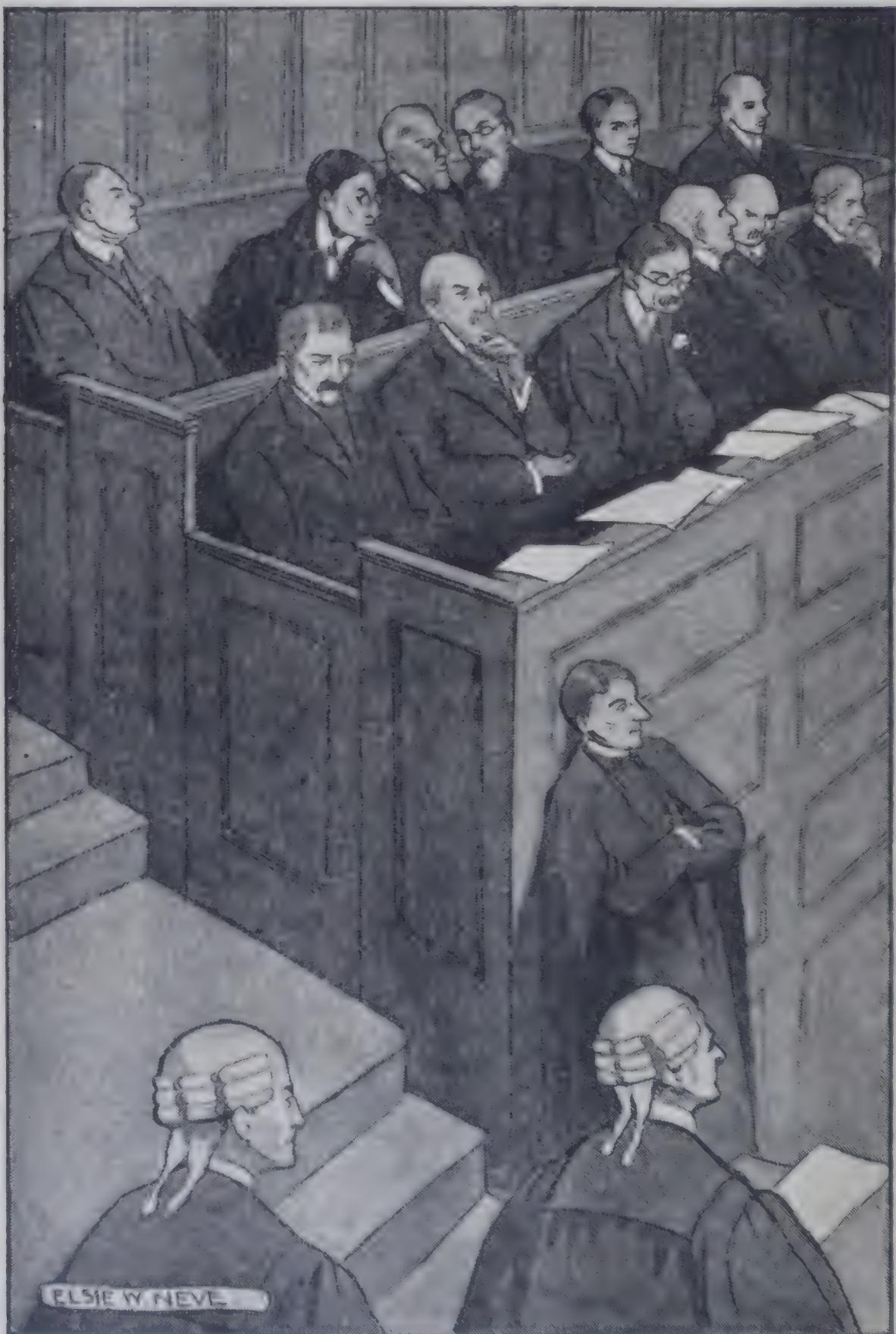


FIG. 81.—A JURY

Doing its work without fear to-day. The twelve men in two rows are the jury. They are listening to the barrister, who is making a speech from notes. The judge cannot be seen. The man standing with folded arms is a servant of the court.

France, blamed him also for the disorder at home. They wished to see the “over-mighty” nobles and their retainers kept in order. Many began to think that the Duke of York should be the king’s minister instead of Somerset. Some people even began to say that York ought to be king, because he was the heir of his uncle the Earl of March.

At last Englishmen were made thoroughly angry in 1453 by the loss of Bordeaux, the last town we held in Aquitaine. The same year Henry became insane; he lost his memory, understood nothing that was said to him, and was unable to walk. Attendants had to wait on him day and night. So the Duke of York became Governor of the realm, and sent Somerset to gaol in the Tower. But at Christmas time Henry recovered his senses after a vigorous course of medical treatment. He had been dieted and dosed, bled and poulticed, scratched and rubbed, bathed and shaved, and subjected to many other weird remedies, which doctors in those days considered were cures for insanity.

Henry dismissed York and called Somerset from gaol to be his minister once more. After this York feared that Somerset would try to kill him, so he determined to rise in rebellion. Thus once more the descendants of Edward III. began to quarrel among themselves.

* * * * *

The struggle which now began is usually called the Wars of the Roses, but it is better to speak of the “War between the houses of York and Lancaster,” for one claimant was descended from Edmund Duke of York, son of Edward III., and the other from another son of Edward, John of Gaunt Duke of Lancaster. The real leader on the Lancastrian side was Queen Margaret, now aged 26. She feared that the Duke of York

intended to make himself king, and she was determined never to allow this. Her own son Edward, who was born in 1453, would lose the throne if the Duke of York won it. This was sufficient to turn Margaret into York's most bitter foe. Her greatest friend was Edmund Duke of Somerset, the king's second cousin.

The Duke of York was, of course, the chief man in his own party. He had vast estates and many retainers. His relations were wealthy. His father-in-law was the Earl of Westmoreland, his wife's brother was the Earl of Salisbury, and Salisbury's son was Earl of Warwick. These men honestly thought that England was badly governed. When we are badly governed to-day parliament refuses to give money to the ministers, and they have to resign. But parliament in the second half of the fifteenth century usually did what ministers told it to do. The members of the House of Commons did not wish to send Somerset away from the king, because Somerset's friends had chosen them at election time. So the minister's enemies had to go to war against him. And as they fought they decided that it would be a good thing to overthrow the king as well as his minister. Richard Duke of York was to take Henry of Lancaster's place. In the long war that now began, sometimes the followers of York were victorious, and sometimes those of Lancaster.

But there were nobles fighting in the Wars of the Roses who thought nothing at all about good government or about claims to the throne. Many men joined one side because their enemies were on the other ; in this way they hoped to meet their enemies in battle and kill them. It was men like this who made the war so cruel. In the twelve pitched battles, which were fought between 1455 and 1471, the slaughter of common people

was not great. They wore only light armour and could easily flee. But the nobles were heavily armoured and were captured. Then their pursuers murdered them at once, or beheaded them on the block next day. The victims' heirs fought in the next battle to win vengeance on the men who had killed their fathers. Men pursuing fugitives were heard to say, "Thy father slew mine, and so will I do to thee."

While nobles killed one another common people took little share in the war. Carpenters went on earning their $5\frac{3}{4}d.$ a day; spinners and weavers continued to make cloth. England had become a cloth-making country now, and sent its cloth to many parts of the Continent, and even to distant places in Russia. Merchants' clerks could be found in German towns collecting money due to their masters. Citizens became so wealthy in the fifteenth century that they began to copy the manners of the nobles. Books were written as guides to good manners, and were eagerly read. Forks are first heard of at York in 1443. Ordinary citizens often made enough money to found schools for the free education of children. All this was going on while nobles and their retainers were slaying one another.

Occasionally, of course, the citizens had anxious moments. When one party sent word to a town to supply a number of soldiers for the army, the townsfolk sent them. But after the battle was over they hurriedly sent congratulations to the conquerors, whether they were Lancastrians or Yorkists. And presents of pheasants, wine, capons, and other dainties were sent by towns to the men who were victorious for the time. Cautious citizens kept beside them a supply of badges belonging to different sides, and wore the badge of the victor until he was defeated.

Throughout the war Henry did what he was told. Sometimes his wits were sharper than at other times ; but never at any time were they very clear. At the first battle which was fought at St. Albans in 1455 his friends were defeated. They ran away and left him standing helpless beside his standard ; he had apparently not enough sense to run himself. At last he was wounded and captured. To his enemies he said, " Ye do foully to smite an anointed King so." His friend the Duke of Somerset was killed.

In 1458, however, he persuaded the two fighting parties to make friends. The leaders on both sides came to London with their fighting men, to hold a conference with Henry. Friendship was made ; the leaders promised to live quietly. To prove their reconciliation they walked in a procession to St Paul's Cathedral. The new Duke of Somerset walked hand in hand with the Earl of Salisbury, and Queen Margaret walked in the same way with her enemy the Duke of York ; other enemies followed them two and two, and the king, wearing his crown, joined in the procession with great happiness.

In 1459, when war broke out again, and York was defeated, Henry strove to prevent too great a revenge being taken by the Lancastrians. At the Battle of Northampton, in 1460, York won the day, and again captured Henry. In the same year the king was compelled to sign a document disinheriting his own son, and promising the crown at his death to York. In 1461 he was led out to fight at the second battle of St. Albans against his wife and son. To his great delight victory fell to the Lancastrians ; he was captured by them and restored to his family.

By this time Richard Duke of York had died at the Battle of Wakefield in 1460, and his son Edward had

taken his place. Edward marched to London and boldly claimed the throne. He said that he was descended through Roger Mortimer Earl of March from Lionel Duke of Clarence, who was an older son of Edward III. than John of Gaunt Duke of Lancaster. The Yorkists in 1461 believed that parliament in 1399 had no right to choose Henry Bolingbroke, but should have chosen the Earl of March. The Londoners agreed with them, and decided to accept Edward Duke of York as their king. He was called Edward IV. Henry was driven into Scotland. In 1465 he was captured again, brought south on horseback, with his feet tied to the stirrups and sent to the Tower.

In 1470 Edward was driven from the throne, and Henry was brought from the Tower to be king again. But by this time through misfortune he had become permanently insane and sat his throne, it was said, "like a stuffed woolsack" or "a crowned calf." Next year the Yorkists won the Battles of Barnet and Tewkesbury ; in the latter battle Henry's son Prince Edward was taken prisoner and cruelly slain. Edward of York became king again, and Henry was sent once more to the Tower, and there murdered.

Henry suffered for no fault of his own. The priest to whom he confessed his sins, said that for ten years he had said or done nothing for which he could be called on to do penance. His gentle nature made even his enemies respect him. But because he was a king his life prevented England from obtaining the peace and good government she longed for. So King Edward was able to put him to death without a protest from any one.

Henry by Edward's orders was buried in St. George's Chapel at Windsor. There Edward's own body was laid in 1483 ; so one roof now covers the victor and the vanquished.

CHAPTER XXX.—EDWARD IV. AND RICHARD III

THE reign of Edward IV. lasted till 1483. But no one thought that the war was finished. People believed any one who prophesied that it would soon begin again. In 1473 some forty men told a silly tale that they had seen a headless man in the air, and heard him shouting, “Bows! Bows!” as though he were urging men to be ready for war.

The kingdom, while Edward IV. ruled, was only a little more peaceful than before. Juries were still frightened when they had to pass verdicts against great men. They often asked to be protected. No country in the world had so many thieves and robbers as England. The woods were still full of wild men living an outlaw life, killing the king’s deer, and robbing his tax-collectors. Great lords still fought out their private quarrels with the aid of armies, which plundered the farmhouses on their opponents’ lands. Parliament found it necessary to pass laws against the keeping of retainers in uniform. So long as nobles had armies at their command there could never be enduring peace in the realm.

On Edward’s death his eldest son, aged 12, became king, as Edward V. His uncle, Richard Duke of Gloucester, desired the throne. He put the young king and his brother into the Tower, and there murdered them. Then he became king himself, and is called Richard III. The bodies of the murdered boys were

buried in the ground at the foot of a flight of stairs, and were covered with a great heap of stones. In 1674, nearly 200 years after the murder, two skeletons were found at the foot of the staircase, which leads to the chapel in the White Tower. They were thought to be the remains of the murdered princes.

Murders like this disgusted even the cruel Englishmen of the time. Across the sea in Brittany there lived a man, who claimed to be the real heir of Henry VI. His name was Henry Tudor.* He was a great great grandson of John of Gaunt; so he belonged to the house of Lancaster, and hated the Yorkists. Wales was his birth-place. He was born in 1457, two years after the first Battle of St. Albans. During the war he had lived in Wales. But in 1470, when Henry VI. had been brought from the Tower to sit upon the throne for the last time, the young Welshman was taken to London, and presented to him. It is said that the old king prophesied that some day the boy would wear the English crown. In 1471, when Edward once more had seized the crown, and Henry VI. was dead in the Tower, Henry Tudor fled to Brittany.

When Edward had died in 1483, and Richard his brother had committed the shameful murder of the little princes in the Tower, even Yorkist noblemen began to think of making Henry Tudor king. They offered to do so if he would unite the families of York and Lancaster by marrying Edward the Fourth's daughter Elizabeth. Henry agreed. In August, 1485, he landed in Pembrokeshire with 2000 men to depose Richard.

Richard had been making warlike preparation. His conscience was troubled at the murders he had committed, and he expected to be murdered himself. A famous

* See Table on p. 252.

man, called Sir Thomas More, wrote a history of Richard in the next century. In it he says that when the king “went abroad (*i.e.* out of his house) his eyes whirled about, his body was privily fenced (*i.e.* he wore a coat of mail beneath his outer garments), his hand was ever on his dagger ; his countenance and manner were like one always ready to strike again. He took ill rest at nights, lay long waking and musing ; sore wearied with care and watch, he rather slumbered than slept. So was his restless heart continually tossed and troubled with the tedious impression and stormy resemblance of his most abominable deeds.”

On Bosworth Field in Leicestershire the Lancastrian and Yorkist met for one more battle. Richard’s men

were traitors at heart ; many deserted on the field, and the king, after charging with fury up to the very presence of Henry Tudor, was cut down fighting like a maniac. His corpse was robbed of its crown by a plunderer, who placed his prize in hiding beneath a thorn bush. Later on it was found, and Lord Stanley, who had gone over to the invader’s side during the battle, placed it on Henry Tudor’s head. Henry in commemoration of this event adopted for his crest a crown on a thorn bush. In his famous



FIG. 82.—The Crown on a Thorn Bush.

chapel at Westminster Abbey you can see a representation of it in the coloured glass of the great window. This victory ended the wars between the Lancastrians and the Yorkists. Henry Tudor became King Henry VII.

In this book you have read a little about some very important events. You have seen how the English were

once divided among many little kingdoms, and slowly were gathered into one. You have seen how they tried to add Scotland and France to their kingdom, and how they failed. In another book you will read how at last England and Scotland were made one.

You have also read how the English ceased to be pagans, and became Christians. It is clear from what Wicliffe and the Lollards were saying that in some ways the Church in the fifteenth century needed to be reformed. The next book will tell you how men attempted to reform it in the sixteenth century.

We have seen that in the earliest English days men governed themselves. Then arose a new way of governing with the help of nobles. This was called feudalism. The king gave lands to his barons, and in return they supplied him with knights and money, gave him advice in his Great Council, and maintained courts of justice. But this way of governing began to disappear also. Kings began to use common men as archers and spearmen, and thought little of heavily armoured knights on horseback. They began to use other ways of doing justice, and to send round their own judges, because they did not trust feudal nobles to be honest in punishing the guilty and protecting the innocent. They also began to tax the common people as well as feudal barons. And so it was right that representatives of the shires and towns should be asked to sit in the Great Council. In this way England began to have something like our parliament. But we read that in Richard the Second's reign the ordinary people had no interest in their parliament, and that great lords could use it for their own purpose. In the next book you will see how the people began to think more about parliament, and began to destroy the power of lords over elections.

But Englishmen in the time of the war between Lancastrians and Yorkists desired good government more than anything else. They wished the king to prevent great lords doing what they liked. The next book tells how Henry VII. and his son Henry VIII. were able to do what Englishmen wanted. Henry VIII. had a famous minister called Wolsey, who was able to write proudly to his master as follows: "And as for your realm, our Lord be thanked, it was never in such peace nor tranquillity; for all this summer I have had neither riot nor felony, nor forcible entry" (*i.e.* breaking into houses by force). He goes on to say, however, that the followers of two important men have had a quarrel, in which one man was slain; but he promises the king that they shall certainly be punished. Think what this good government and peace must have meant to men who remembered the days when big and little armies were fighting all over England, and when citizens were liable to be turned out of their homes or murdered in their beds.

LIST OF DATES

Pre-historic events, known only from archæology

B.C.

Old Stone Men. No one knows when they came or when they disappeared.

New Stone Men, perhaps lived in Britain from about	.	.	.	4000 to 2000
The men who used bronze began to come about	.	.	.	2000
The first Celts came about	.	.	.	800
The Celts who used iron came about	.	.	.	400

Events recorded in writing

The foundation of Rome	.	.	.	.	.	753
First landing of Julius Cæsar in Britain	.	.	.	.	.	55
Second landing of Julius Cæsar in Britain	.	.	.	.	.	54
Death of Julius Cæsar	.	.	.	.	.	44
Augustus became Emperor	.	.	.	.	.	27
						A.D.
The Emperor Claudius sent an army to invade Britain	.	.	.	.	.	43
War of Caratacus against the Romans	.	.	.	.	.	43-50
Revolt of Boadicea	.	.	.	.	.	60
The building of the Roman Wall	.	.	.	.	.	121-123
The castles on the Saxon shore were built about	.	.	.	.	.	300
Departure of the Roman Soldiers	.	.	.	.	.	407
The English began to settle in Britain	.	.	.	.	.	449
Ethelbert, King of Kent	.	.	.	.	.	560-616
St. Columba settled in Iona	.	.	.	.	.	563
Birth of Mahomet	.	.	.	.	.	570
Coming of St. Augustine and the beginning of the Conversion of the English	.	.	.	.	.	597
<i>Edwin, King of Northumbria</i>	.	.	.	.	.	617-633
Edwin became a Christian	.	.	.	.	.	627
<i>Oswald, King of Northumbria</i>	.	.	.	.	.	634-642
St. Aidan came from Iona to Northumbria	.	.	.	.	.	634
Englishmen at Whitby decided to have one Church for all Englishmen	.	.	.	.	.	664
Theodore, Archbishop of all England	.	.	.	.	.	669-690
Death of Cædmon the Poet at Whitby about	.	.	.	.	.	682
Life of Bede	.	.	.	.	.	673-735

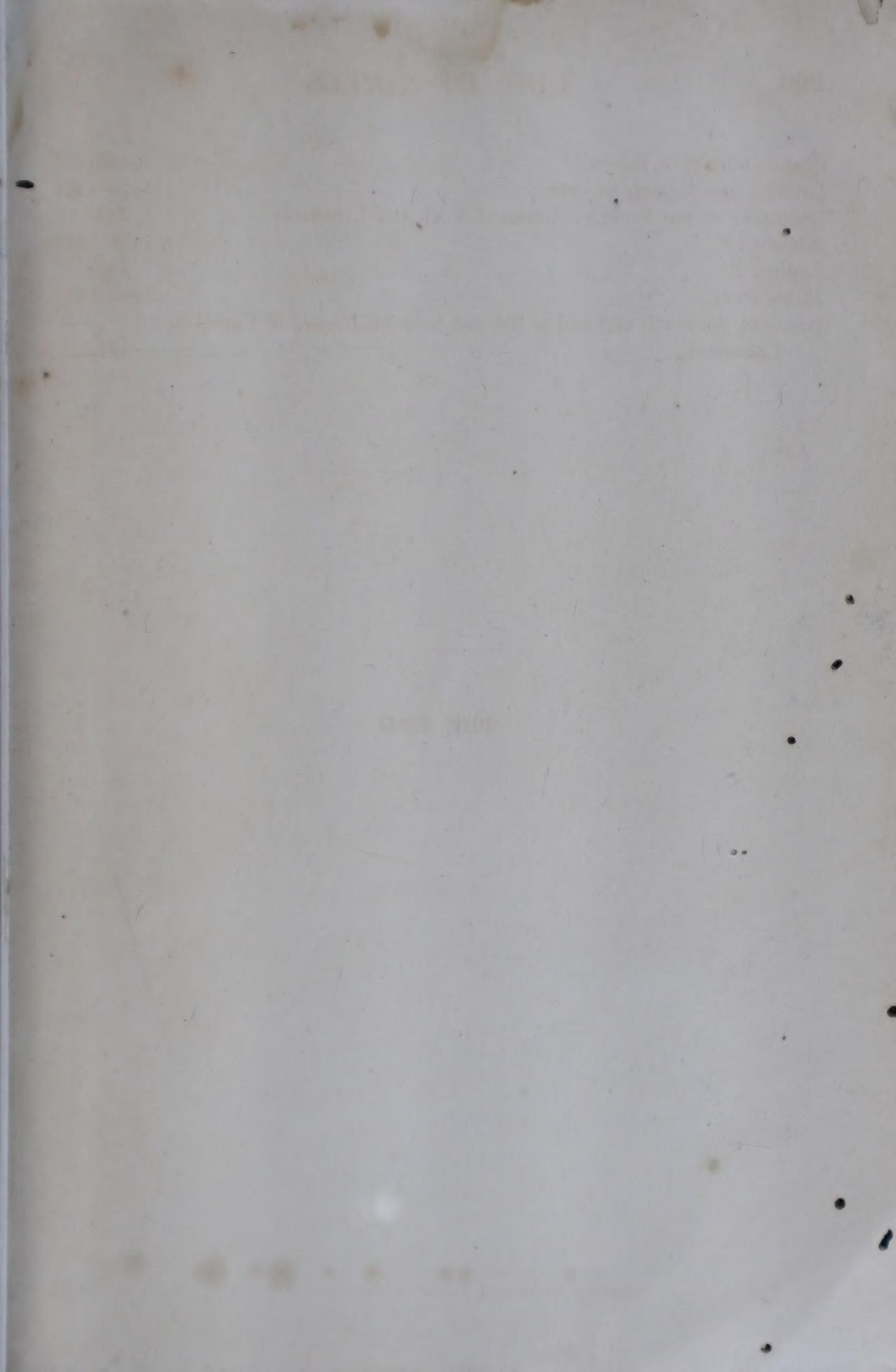
A.D.

Englishmen were ceasing to govern themselves and beginning to work for great nobles about	700
<i>Offa, King of Mercia</i>	757-796
<i>Egbert, King of Wessex</i>	802-839
The Northmen began to ravage England	793
The West Saxons fought nine battles against the Northmen in	871
<i>Alfred, King of Wessex</i>	871-900
Guthrum the Northman invaded Wessex and drove Alfred to Athelney	878
West Saxon victory at Eddington and Peace of Wedmore	878
Alfred took London from the Northmen	886
Alfred built boroughs and trained good soldiers and officials	878-892
Last war of Alfred with the Northmen	892-896
Most of Alfred's books were probably translated between	896 & 900
King Alfred's son and grandsons gradually conquered the Northmen who had settled in England	900-955
Rolf and his Northmen settled in Normandy	911
Battle of Brunanburh	937
Great nobles were everywhere helping in the government and had very many men working for them by the year	950
<i>Edgar the Peaceful ruled over all England</i>	959-975
<i>Ethelred the Redeless</i>	978-1016
Olaf Tryggvason defeated Brihtnoth at Maldon	991
Olaf Tryggvason and Swein of Denmark ravaged England	994
Olaf Tryggvason became a Christian and sailed away to conquer Norway	995
Massacre of Northmen on St. Brice's Day, November 11	1002
Swein of Denmark invaded England a second time	1003
Archbishop Alphege murdered	1012
Swein invaded England a third time and became King	1013
Swein's death	1014
War between Edmund Ironside and Canute	1015-1016
Death of Edmund	1016
<i>Canute, King of England</i>	1016-1035
William Duke of Normandy born	1027
<i>King Edward the Confessor</i>	1042-1066
Harold defeated Harold Hardrada and Tostig at Stamford Bridge	1066
Duke William won the Battle of Hastings	1066
<i>William I., King of England</i>	1066-1087
Norman bishops and abbots began to reform English Church	1066-1070
William defeated Hereward the Wake at Ely	1071
William's officers began to make Domesday Book	1086
<i>William II., called Rufus</i>	1087-1100

	A.D.
The First Crusade	1095
<i>Henry I.</i> , called Beauclerk	1100-1135
<i>Stephen</i>	1135-1154
War in England between Stephen and Matilda	1138-1153
<i>Henry II.</i> , called Plantagenet	1154-1189
Murder of Thomas à Becket	1170
Rebellion of Henry's sons and barons	1172
Saladin captured Jerusalem	1187
<i>Richard I.</i> , called Lionheart	1189-1199
Richard on Crusade	1191-1192
<i>John</i> , called Lackland	1199-1216
John lost Normandy	1204
John's quarrel with Pope Innocent	1205-1213
The winning of Magna Carta	1215
<i>Henry III.</i>	1216-1272
The barons told Henry he must govern according to their wishes	1258
Simon de Montfort drove out foreigners	1258
Simon defeated Henry at Lewes	1264
Simon called together the First Parliament	1265
Simon defeated and killed at Evesham	1265
<i>Edward I.</i> , called Longshanks	1272-1307
Edward chose John Balliol to be King of Scotland	1292
Scotland and France make war against England	1295
Edward deposed Balliol and made himself King of Scotland	1296
Edward promised not to tax wool without permission of Parliament	1297
Wallace defeated English Army at Stirling	1297
Edward defeated Wallace at Falkirk	1298
Robert Bruce began to fight against Edward	1306
<i>Edward II.</i>	1307-1327
Battle of Bannockburn	1314
<i>Edward III.</i>	1327-1377
Beginning of war with France	1337
Battle of Sluys	1340
Battle of Crecy	1346
Capture of Calais	1347
Battle of Poitiers	1356
<i>Richard II.</i>	1377-1399
The Peasants' Revolt	1381
<i>Henry IV.</i>	1399-1413
<i>Henry V.</i>	1413-1422
Victory at Agincourt	1415
<i>Henry VI.</i>	1422-1461
Jeanne d'Arc saved Orleans	1429

	A.D.
Jeanne burned at Rouen	1431
Gradual loss of lands in France	1429-1453
Beginning of war between Houses of York and Lancaster	1455
<i>Edward IV.</i>	1461-1483
<i>Edward V.</i>	1483
<i>Richard III.</i>	1483-1485
Battle of Bosworth and end of the war between Houses of York and Lancaster	1485

THE END



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